

# Christian Courier

A REFORMED WEEKLY, formerly known as Calvinist Contact

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## Conservative churches oppose same-sex law

### Bert Witvoet

TORONTO — Churches in Ontario are scrambling to stop the NDP-led move to change the definition of marriage and spouse in the province's laws. The more conservative churches, that is.

The Toronto Conference of the United Church has gone on record as supporting Bill 167, a bill that seeks to extend spousal recognition and benefits to same-sex couples.

Conference communications minister David Allen reports that a large majority of the 600 delegates to the conference's annual meeting voted in favor of the motion. The motion urges all members of the Ontario

legislature to support passage of the bill "in the interest of justice and fairness."

The rationale given for the conference's motion was a desire to oppose "discrimination against homosexual persons, taking action that they enjoy their full civil and human rights in society."

### Keep definitions

Other groups, like the Roman Catholic Church, the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada (EFC) and the Christian Reformed Church's Committee for Contact with the Government oppose the bill because they want to separate the issue of civil rights from the issue of spousal

status.

While they may support legislation that seeks to extend benefits to dependents, regardless of sexual orientation, they do not want the meaning of "spouse" and "marital status" changed to accomplish that.

"Marriage and family have been given special status in law by governments because of their unique role in providing for a stable and committed relationship between women and men and a setting for the raising of children," says an EFC bulletin called "Ontario Alert!" "If there are reasons why benefits should be given to other kinds of relationships, they should not be given by

rewriting our understanding of marriage and family."

The bulletin has been faxed to a hundred churches and may be sent to 1,000 other churches on the EFC mailing list, says EFC Social Action Commission member Bruce Cleminger.

### A family is a family

Meanwhile, Reinder Klein of the Committee for Contact with the Government has written Attorney General Marion Boyd on behalf of the Christian Reformed Church in Canada, asking her to withdraw the proposed legislation.

"While in a pluralistic society the right of homosexual persons to form domestic partnerships

See NO p. 2...



PHOTO: CANADA WIRE

Attorney General Marion Boyd

## CRC couple discovers outreach takes patience and commitment

### Centre provides food for stomach and soul

#### James Kwantes

MISSION, B.C. — Some Christians respond to the Bible's commands to help the less fortunate in society by throwing a bill or two into the collection plate on Sunday morning. Ed Vandenberg takes a different approach.

He became a longtime volunteer at a downtown outreach centre in Mission, B.C., and now serves as its assistant manager.



Ed Vandenberg, second from l., surrounded by Ken, Kathleen and their three children.

### In this Issue

- A redeemed family anyone?.....p.10
- Gay movement tilts family.....p.11
- China report from Hagt.....p.13
- Syrt Wolters declared righteous.....p.20

## Bill to change 55 laws and human rights code

### Bert Witvoet

TORONTO — The Ontario government is trying to redefine "marital status" and "spouse" so that same-sex couples can have the same rights and benefits as heterosexual couples.

The proposed legislation is called Bill 167 and has narrowly passed first reading. If it is made law in Ontario, 55 acts will be amended to reflect the new terminology.

Among the 55 acts are the Family Support Plan Act, the Human Tissue Gift Act, the Education Act, the Employment Standards Act, the Charitable Institutions Act, the Landlord and Tenant Act and even such seemingly unrelated acts as the Mining Tax Act and the Junior Farmer Establishment Act.

The instructions for these acts include the following: "Replace 'a man and a woman' in each instance with 'two persons'; 'spouse' means, a) a person to whom the person is

See JEWEL p. 2...

Founded in 1984 by Fred and Elly Bosma and originally associated with the 700 Club, the drop-in centre is a haven for those who have slipped through the cracks of mainstream society. Formerly called the House of Blessing, many of its regulars sleep under the nearby city bridge or beside the rail-

road tracks across the street.

### Front line action

"Sometimes it gets scary in here; we get drunks, hookers and drug dealers coming in," says Vandenberg, who works at the centre six days a week.

See AFTER p. 2...

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94

114

## News

# 'No one has the right to adopt a child'

*...continued from p. 1*

may be entitled to legal recognition, we nevertheless are of the strong opinion that same-sex couples should not be called or considered families," writes Klein.

Klein has also mailed a statement to all CRCs in Ontario with suggestions for bulletin announcements and letter campaigns.

Both the EFC bulletin and the

contact committee letter oppose the right of same-sex couples to adopt children.

At the same time, the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Toronto has urged his over one million parishioners to tell Queen's Park that "any attempts to promote a homosexual lifestyle as the equivalent of legal marriage must be vigorously opposed."

He has asked all churches in

the archdiocese, which reaches from Mississauga to Oshawa and north to Midland, that "pens and papers be provided for people to write letters on the spot" protesting Bill 167.

## Watering down

In his letter to Boyd, Klein defined family as "the basic social unit characterized by a committed relationship based upon, but not limited to, kin-

ship, blood ties and a marital covenant between husband and wife that grants them the potential for bringing children into this world."

The basic problem with the legislation, according to Paul Marshall, who acted as consultant to the EFC commission, is that the definition of a family is watered down. "You're not expanding the definition but removing it," he says.

Marshall says that adoption should not be considered a right. "No one has the right to adopt a child. But a child has the right to be taken care of by a family," says Marshall, who teaches political theory at Toronto's Institute for Christian Studies. "That right is best acknowledged when the child is adopted by a family that has a good father and mother," he adds.

## After seven years, mission worker draws salary for first time

*...continued from p. 1*

"It's definitely a front line." Ed and his wife, Renie, volunteered full-time at the House of Blessing from 1986 to December 1992. Ed's job as custodian of Trinity Christian Reformed Church helped the couple make ends meet.

"Those were exciting days," says Vandenberg. "We were living by faith and doing something that really needed to be done." The Vandenburgs took over the centre for a year but it

proved to be too big a load for them.

In January 1993, a large organization running several outreach and ministry programs in B.C.'s Lower Mainland took over the operation and kept Vandenberg on full time. He is now drawing a salary for his work at the centre for the first time in seven years.

"Sometimes you want to cry," says Vandenberg of his work at the drop-in centre. "You see the agony in the kids' faces and you

PHOTO: COURTESY VANDENBERG



Sonny likes the friendly atmosphere

can't do anything. Many times there is no physical abuse but lots of emotional abuse."

## Church indifference

The lack of support from the Christian Reformed community is a source of frustration for Vandenberg.

"I respect the church, but to be honest, the support from Trinity CRC has been disappointing," he admits. "The church did take up offerings for the centre and some members gave financial support. However, in my seven years here, no pastor and only two elders have set foot in the mission."

The Vandenburgs recently joined New Life CRC in Abbotsford after leaving Trinity CRC, where they had been longtime members and active in church life. Their new church features non-traditional worship as well as a greater emphasis on missions and outreach.

Vandenberg feels that the Christian Reformed denomination does not put enough effort into evangelism. "We have good sermons but are not well-equipped to tell people about Jesus Christ," he says. "We want to have 400,000 by the year 2,000, but I don't know how if we are unwilling to tell people the good news."

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## 'Jewel' bill joins sex orientation to creed

*...continued from p. 1*

married; or b) a person of either sex with whom the person is living in a conjugal relationship outside marriage; replace 'the member's spouse or child' with 'anyone in his or her household'; add the following subsection: 'two persons of the same sex who have cohabited in a conjugal relationship for at least one year'; replace 'widow, widower' in the definition of 'supplementary benefit' with 'surviving spouse'; replace 'wife or husband' with 'spouse'; replace 'matrimonial home' in each instance with 'family home'."

In addition to changing terminology in 55 acts, the bill amends the Human Rights Code by inserting "sexual orientation" after "creed" as another area of life in which there may be no discrimination.

Ontario Attorney General Marion Boyd has been quoted as describing the legislative initiative as "the jewel in my crown."

berg.

Children are an important part of the centre's outreach. A van buses kids in from neighboring communities on Sundays for singing and Sunday school. Jerry Vos, a Christian school teacher and a member of Second CRC in neighboring Abbotsford, tutors some of the children on a volunteer basis. "The kids are really eager to learn but it's hard when there's so little support in the home," he says.

Those who frequent the centre praise it.

"I was in a state of war against God," says a regular named Ken of his previous lifestyle. "I had a \$300-a-day cocaine habit and was drinking myself to death. I don't think I would have made it another six months." Ed Vandenberg ministered to Ken and helped him find a job with a construction company owned by two members of Trinity CRC.

"It was a pretty tough ride until I found this place; actually, until I found the Lord," says Ken. "Ed really turned me around."

## Comment

# Calling suicide trend 'disease' a cop-out

**John Hiemstra**

Professionals identified "totally discouraged disease" as a leading cause of aboriginal suicide at a recent conference held in northern Canada. Many young natives have so completely lost hope that they are being diagnosed as "sick." They are convinced that suicide is their only escape from this disease.

In response to this human tragedy, the suicide professionals at this conference called on the government to devise a national strategy to prevent aboriginal suicide.

The issue of aboriginal suicide is important. However, there is a deeper issue at stake. In order to address it properly, Christians need to ask why the cause of this social problem is labelled a "disease."

The beginning of an answer lies in the way we define social problems. Problems do not exist neutrally, but are always identified and defined by people with worldviews. Worldviews color the way we see and interpret problems for better or worse.

**Sickness and the modern worldview**

Modern society has a strong tendency to identify the causes of difficult problems as disease. A young offender who breaks into an Edmonton home and murders a woman is seen as sick. Vandals are defined as sick. Managers who steal from their companies are classified as sick. The list goes on.

There are at least two features of the modern worldview that lead to this tendency.

First, if we call something a disease, it seems to absolve us of any guilt. Suicide is caused by a disease and so it is no one's fault in particular. Aboriginal Canadians are simply sick. No one has to feel responsible.

Second, calling something a disease is attractive because the modern mind is fully confident that science can fix all of our problems. If a murderer is sick, then a little psychological science can fix the problem and make him normal. If aborigines are committing suicide because of "totally discouraged disease," then a national strategy offering psychological and family counselling will fix the problem.

In essence, the idea of identifying the source of social problems as disease is part of the modern attempt to deny the central importance of God, the reality of sin in this world and our need for redemption.

**How can we respond?**

There is much truth to the claim that many aboriginal people who contemplate suicide are totally discouraged.

But Christians should not allow society to hide its guilt and arrogant "fix-it" mentality

by calling this a disease. That allows society to escape the responsibility that we all share for the sin of treating native peoples unjustly and dispossessing them of their land and culture.

Many aboriginal people feel lost precisely because we have tried to dissolve their economic, social and cultural way of life into our secular and materialistic society.

Will the Christian community that confesses its hope in God, say and do something

for those suffering from "totally discouraged disease"?

Since Christ has given us a new start in all things, perhaps we should also call for a new start for native Canadians. This will require us to act immediately on native suicide prevention. It also means that we should push for the rapid settle-

ment of long-standing land claims and for a just way of allowing aboriginal self-government within the Canadian political system.

*John Hiemstra is assistant professor of political studies at The King's University College in Edmonton, Alta.*

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The Christian Reformed Church in North America (CRCNA), is currently seeking applicants for the position of Co-ordinator of Church Relations/Diaconal Ministries in the Christian Reformed World Relief Committee-Canada (CRWRC-Canada). The qualified individual must be a creative, energetic self starter with good communications and marketing skills, while possessing an understanding and appreciation of Diaconal ministries and the work of the CRWRC. The responsibilities include establishing and maintaining strong linkages and support of the work of the CRWRC by our churches and the business community. The co-ordinator will also work with deacons in developing their understanding of CRWRC's work.

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## Editorial

# Boys will be absentee men without Christian schools

I should have written this editorial two weeks ago when our in-office reporter, Irene Bom, wrote about men not attending church as faithfully as women in several denominations. But I had already written my editorial for the week and there were other things to attend to. I do have something I want to say, however.

So far, the unfortunate development of absentee husbands and sons has not happened to a great extent in Reformed denominations, except perhaps in the Reformed Church of America.

Why is that? Is it because some of us are better Christians? Don't even for a minute entertain that thought. And I know instinctively that it is not because of the changing role of women in many churches, as some people allege. Men stepped out long before women stepped up. And if men have a hard time adjusting to a gentler and more caring church, the fault lies not with women but with those

men who equate maleness with conquest.

That many Reformed denominations do not show a gender imbalance I link to the fact that its members tend to send their children to the Christian school. Interestingly enough, members of the RCA do not as a rule seek out Christian day-school education.

My theory, and it is only a theory, not backed up by any scientific research, is that the reason Christian schools play such an important role in keeping men in church is because they help socialize boys into the faith. Boys need that kind of structural help more than girls.

## Initiated into manhood

Let me explain. When I was 16 years old I worked for four-and-a-half years in a factory that produced tires, fanbelts and hoses. Most of the people working in the plant were men. So I got a good dose of what I would call North American male culture. It showed itself in the way we talked and the way we treated each other.

The talk was often rough and unprintable. I would not care to repeat some of the words that rolled off my tongue as I was learning a new language. And I won't hide behind ignorance. Using vulgar language gave this immigrant boy a sense of power.

What struck me about many of the men was the contemptible way in which they talked about women. Women were viewed as objects of their lust. When we saw a girl pass the factory as we sat in a window sill drinking a coffee, the talk inevitably centred around what she would be like in bed. The shape of her body was weighed and either approved of or found wanting.

"Suppose that was your sister?" I once said to one of my fellow workers. "I'd knock your teeth out if you said anything bad about her," was the laconic reply. But it wasn't his sister, so why should he care?

I do not suggest that all men talk this way in the various workplaces of the nation. But my experience with a significant part of male culture is not unique and has made me wonder what this does to impressionable boys.

## Images of conquest

There are other things that shape a young boy. The whole world of sports is mostly a male phenomenon into which boys are initiated at an early age. Sports is a powerful force that,

when played religiously, i.e., fanatically, either directly or vicariously, almost assures that a boy will not get in touch with his feelings. A couple of doses of Don Cherry on "Hockey Night in Canada" is enough to make emotional cripples of most of us.

Then there are the other images of strength and conquest — cars, muscles, hunting, "power" clothing, corporate positions and war — that are dangled in front of aspiring men. How well do these things prepare boys for doing Christ's will on earth? Remember? The meek shall inherit the earth!

Not all "male" stuff is bad, mind you. I firmly believe that male hormones prepare boys for a different lifestyle than the one that has been designed for girls. The challenge for boys is not to be like girls, or vice versa, but for boys to become sensitive and caring males, moulded in the image of God.

## Feelings are OK

Christian schools help to fill in a few important gaps for boys, especially if they encourage emotional openness. Boys can learn that faith is not just for girls and that spirituality and inner feelings are OK. Girls don't need the Christian school so much for that particular part of their development, I believe. Because of the female culture they step into they are more inclined to be in touch with themselves and to acknowledge the importance of feelings and longings, be they spiritual or emotional.

I would not want to justify Christian schools on the basis that they socialize boys into religion. That would make them too narrow for boys and useless for girls. Christian schools serve a larger purpose of integrating faith and learning, creating good work habits and promoting the idea of covenant and community, to mention only a few.

But when I think of the fewer-men-than-women phenomenon in many churches, I do say to myself: Would this have happened if all Christians had seen the connection between their promises at the baptism or dedication of their children and the education of these children? I think not.

All the more reason for churches to promote Christian day schools among their members. The life of the church depends on it.

BW

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## Comment /Letters

# Does God have a separate plan for Israel?

Many North American Christians view the ongoing developments in the Middle East through the lenses of a biblical hermeneutic known as dispensationalism, one which draws a thick line between Israel and the church. According to this position, God has two chosen peoples and two separate plans for dealing with each of them.

Many, if not most, dispensationalists see the establishment of the modern state of Israel in 1948 as part of this plan, and this belief colors the way they view the politics and the region. In particular, because they believe that the Jewish people have a God-given right to the land between the Mediterranean Sea and the Jordan River (or possibly even beyond), they are prejudiced against what they might otherwise be able to recognize as the legitimate rights of Palestinian Arabs.

**Recent invention**

What many such Christians do not realize is that dispensationalism, with its characteristic doctrines, is a recent invention dating back little more than a century-and-a-half to John Nelson

Darby and the Plymouth Brethren in England. The popularity of the *Scofield Reference Bible* in the early years of this century helped to spread the influence of this hermeneutical school throughout North America, and many otherwise orthodox Christians simply took this to be "mere Christianity."

Does God have a separate plan for a literal, political Israel after the advent of Jesus Christ into the world? Although the New Testament does hint at a possible future conversion of the Jews, I believe that the notion of two separate peoples of God has little biblical foundation. Nor does it accord with the Reformed belief in the ultimate unity of the two covenants in Jesus Christ. Such Scripture passages as Romans 3:29-30, 9:6-8 and Ephesians 2:11-16 clearly indicate that God in Christ has broken down the barriers separating Jew and Gentile.

**Beyond ethnicity**

What implications does this have for the way we Christians understand the politics of the Middle East? If the church is indeed heir to the promises

made by God to Israel, then we must understand the status of the so-called Holy Land in a qualitatively different way than is suggested by a dispensational reading of the Old Testament.

Rather than assuming that the latter here and now gives this particular piece of real estate to the modern Jewish people, we must instead see these passages in light of the New Testament, which promises that all believers, Jew and Gentile, will reign together with Christ over the whole earth. Just as the promise of salvation now extends beyond narrow ethnic boundaries, so also does the geographical setting of this promise extend beyond the boundaries of the "Holy Land" to embrace the entire earth (Matt. 5:4, 25:34; Rev. 11:15, 21:1-4).

If we understand this, then we are free to take seriously the numerous biblical injunctions calling us to do justice to those who are strangers or defenseless (e.g., Exodus 22:21, 23:9; Deut. 10:16-19; Isaiah 10:1-2; Matt. 25:35). And we must therefore conclude that any attempt of one people to displace another from its home violates the explicit bibli-

**POLITICS**

David Koyzis



cal principles of justice by which all persons must order their lives — including political life.

*David T. Koyzis teaches political science at Redeemer College, Ancaster, Ont., and has worn only two sets of contact lenses in 22 years.*

## Klein was not amused

Imagine my surprise when, looking at the front page of your April 29 issue, I see my name (*See KLEIN p.5...*) prominently displayed beneath an article on crime and next to the start of something on prostitutes and condoms.

Having been raised in a community that honed guilt, even by association, to a very fine edge, I felt the phrase "I didn't do it!" being pressed out of me,

naturally. Not bothering to read the articles, I immediately phoned my children in B.C., my mother in Ottawa and my sister in Holland to protest my innocence.

And because I had just faxed letters on behalf of the Council of Christian Reformed Churches in Canada to Premier Bob Rae and Prime Minister Jean Chretien, I phoned them as well to let them know that, yes, I had a darker side, but didn't we all? I mean, Bob showed up a long time ago as a socialist, of all things, and after years of trying to hide it by speaking English,

Jean has admitted to being *French!*

Mr. Editor, in the future please consider the impact of taking some names in vain. Not all persons you hurt are little people like me. Some could really zap you, the way what's-his-name in Alberta, that portly little man, zaps social programs. Then your disapproval rate would really shoot up, wouldn't it? Then you'd be neither optimistic nor hopeful. And then what would I use to line my bird cages?

Reinder Klein  
Creemore, Ont.

## Christ as the way to God is not a private matter

Readers of the *Globe and Mail* had a surprise on May 17, 1994. Right on the front page was an article which said: "Council president suggests Jesus not the only valid route to God." The article was referring to a statement by the Rev. Bruce McLeod, president of the Canadian Council of Churches (CCC). He said, "...Whatever else, Jesus is a window into the mystery we call God" (emphasis added).

Spokespersons for the Reformed Church in Canada (RCA) picked up on that, pointing out the uniqueness of Christ: "We in the Reformed Church do not believe all religions are windows to God."

I felt rather good that a church of the Reformed family had the gumption to point out the obvious heresy.

So I was somewhat dismayed to read in CC of May 27 that a Christian Reformed representative called the protest "grandstanding."

Since all of the above is in the public domain, I thought I'd ask "Why?" in this letter, even though I am no fan of discussions via letters to the editor.

A second question I have pertains to the view of one of the CRC committee members that Matthew 18 should have been followed. I lay no claim to being a theologian, but I fail to see what Matthew 18 has to do with it. There it states: "If a brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you" (emphasis added), clearly referring to a matter between two individuals.

**Should be applauded**

The public statement to the effect that Jesus is not the only way to God hardly qualifies as a personal matter, but directly contradicts Christ's words: "No one comes to the Father except through me." A public rebuttal was quite in order and should be applauded.

My third question pertains to the prayers to the spirits of the north, south, east and west that assembly delegates participated in. That, in my humble view, is pagan drivel.

So one of CCRCC "rookie" members said, "There were things done that we're not used to, but they were done for interfaith purposes. Our church isn't that advanced yet."

That may be just an unfortunate turn of phrase, but I would say: "Our church hasn't sunk that low yet." The first statement makes it sound as if we should be looking forward to the day when the CRC might be just as "advanced."

The closing sentence of the article said, "The assembly also expressed solidarity with the people of Newfoundland without a livelihood, congratulated new South African president Nelson Mandela and encouraged churches to empower women." These are fine causes, of course. But why does the

church not stick to its knitting, i.e., the gospel proclamation? Is it because it cannot agree on how many windows there are to God? In view of the evidence of CCC's mindset that allows a complete denial of the heart of the Gospel, I'm quite happy that the CCRCC decided *not* to join the Canadian Council of Churches.

Hank Kuntz  
Etobicoke, Ont.

## Helpful diagnosis from Quebec

I would think that you were, at one point in your life, all three: an emigrant, when you left the Netherlands to come to Canada; a migrant while en route; and an immigrant, once you had arrived within Canada.

You are still, I believe, the former and the latter, but not the middle.

Now as to your migraine. Since it was caused by an outside dilemma, I would say it was as you said, an emigraine. Had it resulted from a dietary indiscretion, it would be an im-migraine.

Allowing for the inadequacies of *Canada Post*, this should arrive in the possession of your eminent self, imminently.

Lloyd Burghart  
Montreal, Que.

# ON THE JOB WITH DICK NYWENING— MUNICIPAL POLITICIAN (Mayor)

Age: 50-something

Location: Town of Strathroy, Ont.

## How did you become a municipal politician?

In June 1969 I was elected as a municipal representative to the Strathroy-Middlesex General Hospital and a few years later I became chairperson of that board.

I served on several provincial bodies before deciding to return to the municipal level in 1982. I felt things could be improved at the local level and I wanted to make a difference. I was elected to town council that year. For the past six years I have been mayor of the town.

Strathroy, near London, Ont., has around 11,000 citizens. Recreational vehicles and Cuddy Foods are some of the town's main industries. There are two Christian Reformed

churches in Strathroy totally around 1,000 families.

## What is your typical work day like?

I also own a real estate agency, but in an average week I spend about 30 hours on being mayor. I go to town hall to meet with planners and developers, staff members and the general public. Of course, I chair most public meetings. These meetings are now live on camera [for cable television]. It has changed the whole way we run each meeting. Some council members are intimidated by the camera.

I always tell council that no decision will make everybody happy. We have to base our decisions on facts — never mind what they say in the coffee shop.

As elected representatives we have to ask ourselves, "Is this fair to the people we represent

and are we treating everybody equally?"

## Does your job help you live your faith?

My faith is part of me. I try to show by personal example what would be best.

I received lots of support from the community for my position on Sunday shopping. Strathroy had a bylaw that kept most shops closed on Sunday — also for the quality of family life — until Ontario provincial laws were introduced that superseded our municipal bylaw. However, I cannot dictate what others can or cannot do to observe the Sabbath by, for example, closing public swimming pools or arenas on Sunday. A community is a very large business.

## What about making a living?

The mayor of Strathroy earns \$13,500 annually.

## What do you like best about your job?

I like best to assist people who are experiencing hardships. For example, I can try to help

them get access to provincial and federal programs. I can make contacts for these citizens. I get a sense of satisfaction from being of help that way.

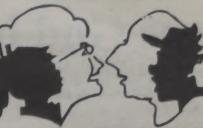
## Is there anything about it you dislike?

It takes a lot of personal commitment, including from my family. Sometimes the hours I spend attending [evening] meetings and events interfere with family life. I have four teenagers.

## Any suggestions for career strategists?

I encourage any Christian anywhere to participate in municipal politics either by supporting a candidate or by running themselves. At this level one person can make a difference. One can start by serving on a library or museum board. It doesn't often happen that one is immediately elected to council.

*The opinions expressed in this column might not necessarily reflect average working conditions or career prospects.*



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Nandy Heule

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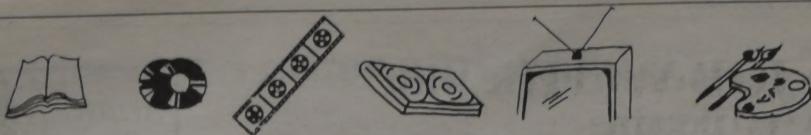
CARS • MOTORHOMES • MINIVANS



CIDA Photo: David Barbour, Ethiopia

(NC)—It is estimated that by the year 2000, 26 million people will be infected with the AIDS virus. Ninety percent of the cases will be in the developing world. In Africa alone, 10 to 15 million children will be orphaned within the next five years as a result of the deadly virus. The Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) funds many AIDS education projects including a five-year comprehensive program to halt the spread of AIDS in Zimbabwe.

## Media / Arts



## Cinema Summaries

**Maverick: lighthearted con job**

Marian Van Til

Rated PG

Stars Mel Gibson, Jodie Foster, James Garner, Graham Greene  
Screenplay by William Goldman  
Directed by Richard Donner

Released on Friday, May 27, *Maverick* is the first of a spate of about 50 (yes, 50!) movies due to come out this summer. Nor is it the only one to cash in on a nostalgia trend which has been inflating old TV shows and bringing them to the big screen (this year's attempt at recreating the *Flintstones* cartoon with live actors has also just opened and is deservedly sinking like a rock).

*Maverick*, the 1960s TV version, was an amusing show. It goodnaturedly lampooned many of the conventions of the TV Western: *Maverick*, played with a sly smile by that ever-likeable guy James Garner, wasn't macho, wasn't fearless, and he wasn't silent. He won most of his battles with his wits instead of his guns (he was a fast draw when he needed to be), and his favorite pastime was card-playing, not going after bad guys.

In the movie, Mel Gibson takes over as *Maverick*. But Garner is there too, as lawman Zane Cooper — and to provide for the film's surprise ending. The third major character is Annabelle Bransford, a light-fingered conwoman, played with coy humor by Jodie Foster.

**The joke's on us too**

The story involves *Maverick* trying to rustle up the final few thousand dollars he needs to enter a poker championship which requires a \$25,000 entrance fee and has a winner's pot of \$500,000 — not pocket change now, much less in the late 19th century. Given the TV series one would expect the movie to be lighthearted. It is; and Gibson, Garner and Foster work particularly well together in such a setting, with Garner as the straight man. In addition, native Canadian Graham Greene does a humorously anachronistic turn as a put-upon but wily Indian chief who is sick and tired of kowtowing to white men. There are also a couple of effective in-jokes, such as the one in which Gibson/*Maverick* says "Don't I know you...?" when he meets a black cowboy in the street played by Danny Glover, Gibson's co-star in the *Lethal Weapon* movies.

In fact, part of the joke's on us; we realize when it's over

we've been had (reminiscent of *The Sting*). But there's something missing. It drags, despite the amiability of its stars, the funny moments and some of the most stunning scenery in any recent movie (a canyon in Utah, and floating down a river on an old steam-driven paddlewheeler). There's just not enough substance here to keep the movie afloat (pardon the pun). And most of the humor is slapstick rather than real wit. *Maverick*, a perfect vehicle for the small screen, simply doesn't translate well as a movie.

**No 'nutritional' value**

It should also be mentioned that this film doesn't offer much in the way of moral values. Sure, it doesn't mean to be taken seriously. Yet it pretty much glorifies gambling as a way of life in a time when gambling, with the blessing of governments, is becoming an international addiction. It creates a fantasy world that any gambler would dream of, and naturally it has you rooting for *Maverick* to win the pot. It's true that most of the lying, swindling characters "get theirs." But *Maverick* is one of those movies that's like some fluffy dessert. It's enjoyable at the time, but afterwards you're left wondering why you ate it.

## Book Review

**Smiling after you've turned 65**

*As Long As I Live: Thoughts on Growing Older*, by Jacob D. Eppenga, Grand Rapids, Mich.; Burlington, Ont.: CRC Publications, 1993. 195 pp., plus study guide. Reviewed by Nandy Heule, a journalist in St. Catharines, Ont.

Are you growing old or growing up?

Can our losses be turned into gains?

Can worry add a single hour to our lives?

These are some of the questions Rev. Jacob Eppenga tries to answer in *As Long As I Live: Thoughts on Growing Older*. This is a small book in large print intended for seniors. It is written by a loved senior citizen and pastor of the Christian Reformed Church.

In his introduction, Eppenga tells "those under 65" that "they too may listen in if they wish," and they would do well to heed his invitation. First, because this book will provide caretakers of "oldsters" insight into the daily lives of the elderly; and second, because "young people need to know how to live so their old age will be a melody, not a dirge" (p. 127).

**Graceful and positive**

In *As Long As I Live* the author shares anecdotes and jokes, collected, no doubt, during his past three-score-and-ten of reading widely and living "gracefully and positively." Better yet, the book quotes widely and convincingly from the Bible without ever becoming overly sentimental.

Eppenga speaks honestly to

his peer group, urging them to continue to sing praise to their God as long as they live (Psalm 104:33). Yet he never stoops to senseless cheerleading or empty "positive thinking." He acknowledges that old age may bring worries, losses, operations and loneliness, but then proceeds to offer scriptural passages and pastoral insight into how a senior pilgrim might take charge — again.

In addition to pastoring the elderly with this book, Eppenga offers "youngsters" under 65 preventative living skills that could help juniors avoid some of the pitfalls of old age.

This book is a rare cross-generational treat that will make Opa and Oma and their grandchildren laugh, cry and share.

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**Church**, Marian Van Til, page editor

## Christian doctors struggle with shortages in Ukraine

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. (REC) — A French team visiting the Ukraine with Hungarian guidance reports Christian doctors and nurses there struggle to provide even minimal care. Three men from the Evangelical Reformed Church in France — Harold Kallermeyn, Martin Duckwitz and Jean-Louis Saretto — and joined by Hungarian pastor Daniel Szabo, carried an initial gift of 300 kg of

medicine. Two French aid groups — Malta and Doctors without Borders — supplied the medicine without charge.

The team reports that Ukraine had already suffered in the former Soviet Union. Doctors and nurses work with equipment made before the Second World War. Because of the weakness of the Ukraine currency, hospitals are unable to buy medical supplies. Some

even lack running water.

The hospital in Nagyobrony, a 40-bed hospital staffed largely by Christians, was a high point of the team's visit. Doctors and nurses there had cleaned and painted the building using their own time and money. They worked closely with the local Reformed church to help transport the sick.

## Croatian Christians learn how to help victims of war

BIZOVAC, Croatia (EP) — In a nation scarred by ongoing ethnic conflict, Christian leaders in Croatia are looking to offer their neighbors more than just physical relief.

To better equip leaders with the skills they need to reach their embattled neighbors in the former Yugoslavia, a "Conference of Peace and Hope" was sponsored by World Relief and Croatia's Protestant Evangelical Council (PEC) May 24-28.

"Just meeting physical needs is not enough to help people survive the traumas of war," says Bas Vanderzalm, World Relief's international director. "We have seen that in war and other disaster areas, the church

has a marvellous opportunity and challenge to help meet the emotional and spiritual needs of survivors, especially in former Yugoslavia where war keeps grinding away."

World Relief delivered more than \$500,000 in emergency supplies to the PEC, whose members delivered them to embattled people throughout the war-torn region during the past two years. However, church leaders feel rations alone are not meeting all the needs of their people, according to Martin Hartog, World Relief's European liaison. As many of the leaders have not obtained formal training, "they don't feel confident about addressing

trauma and emotional needs." "Last year, we helped evangelicals in Liberia bring together leaders from across the country," says Vanderzalm. "Our goal then, and our goal in the former Yugoslavia, was to help these leaders learn how they can be peacemakers and bearers of hope in their own communities even in the midst of war." Since the gathering of leaders in Liberia last year, a fragile cease-fire has continued and the country is slowly rebuilding from the crushing war.

Without the reconciliation efforts of the church in a war zone, "food or relief alone will not address the deeper issues,"

## South African Reformed churches unite across racial boundaries

CAPETOWN, South Africa (EP) — Prior to the historic elections in South Africa, an unusual church union was taking place. Two South African Reformed churches, one black and one mixed-race church, met to join and become a new, non-racial church.

The Uniting Reformed Church in South Africa was formed when the Dutch Reformed Mission Church and the Dutch Reformed Church joined forces in mid-April.

"At this moment in history, when your country sets out on a new journey, the union of your churches bears witness to the fundamental truth that the road which lies ahead must be marked by reconciliation and unity," wrote Konrad Raiser, general secretary of the World Council of Churches in a message to the church.

"In coming together, you who were held in bondage have begun the process of healing the wounds and healing the memories. Your commitment is a sign of hope for all," said Raiser.

added Hartog. "The Croatian evangelical churches need to address pain and hurt. They have expressed a need to know how to heal wounds of the spirit."

## No women clergy for Wales

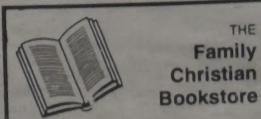
LAMPETER, Wales (EP) — Just a month after the Church of England ordained its first women priests, the Anglican Church in Wales failed to approve the same measure. First proposed 15 years ago, the measure requires a two-thirds

majority from the bishops, clergy and laity of the Welsh church, a majority garnered from the bishops and laity, but voted down by the clergy. The vote was so close that the measure will be considered again next year.

## Poles respond to gospel crusade

GDANSK, Poland (EP) — More than 700 adults responded to the gospel invitation of evangelist Luis Palau during a three-day crusade in Gdansk, Poland, April 29 to May 1. Prior to the

crusade, total membership of the area's evangelical churches amounted to around 750 people. "Dr. Palau's messages were so appropriate for us," said crusade chairman Roman Baranowski. "They got right to the souls of Polish men and women searching for reality in religion."



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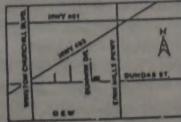
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## Meditation/News

# Authority of elders and other ambassadors

In the Hungarian Reformed Church the preachers wear black capes and elders sit in special benches, fitting the dignity of their office. In some other Reformed churches the elders also sit a little higher than ordinary worshipers. In most Christian Reformed congregations the elders sit with their family or friends.

Today we are witnessing a liturgical upswing. Preachers wear robes, often with a stole or scarf that denotes their office and that fits the season. I would not be surprised if special seats for officers will be re-introduced very soon. After all, do not the elders sit on thrones in the liturgy of Revelation 4:4?

The dress of a preacher and the elevation of the elders' bench depends on local tastes and traditions. But the question of the authority of officebearers is perennial.

There are two extremes. On the one side is the hierarchical or pyramid tradition. Here the officers are as good as Christ himself when they bless or preach or give the sacraments. Hence, in these churches, the officers are dressed in other-worldly garments and sit in elevated seats. On the other side are those who say that only Christ has authority and all of us are equal. If expedience requires that the church have officers, the congregations votes. But the "board" functions as in any other (democratic) organization.

Reformed churches hold a middle ground. We acknowledge that all members are equally anointed by the Spirit. But we also admit that Christ gives special officers. And they get their authority not so much from the people but from the Lord.

Christ is the Head. Officers have a derived authority. And this is what "derived authority" means: Sometimes my wife and I would go away for an evening and leave the children under the leadership of the eldest. "You must do what Jo says and when we get home she'll tell us if you went to bed on time." That authority was temporary and not vested in her person. If she would have gotten any bossy ideas, her siblings would have said, "Who do you think you are?" But the authority was real for the evening because her parents were ready to back her up.

### Christ will 'back them up'

Officebearers must have the certainty that Christ "will back them up." They are the "homesitters" until the Lord's

return and may act with his authority in "binding and loosening" (Matt. 18:18). History warns us, however, not to take ourselves too seriously when we dress up the preacher and elevate the officers. Without malice their spiritual siblings might say now and then, "Who do you think you are?"

Authority does not rest solely on appointment. That's only the formal side. Authority in the church needs the character of Christ. That's the material side.

Paul not only appealed to his apostolic appointment (Gal. 1:11,12, 1 Cor. 9:1, etc.), but bore the "marks of Jesus" on his body (Gal. 6:17). Paul had suffered with and for Jesus. He and all "ambassadors for Christ" (2 Cor. 5:20) authenticate the story of the gospel by living it (2 Cor. 6:3-10). People will obey Christ when the representative has the

**Andrew Kuyvenhoven**

**CHAPTER  
&  
VERSE**



formal and the material credentials.

*Andrew Kuyvenhoven is a retired Christian Reformed pastor and former Banner editor who lives in Grand Rapids, Mich.*

## Even evangelicals push Scripture off centre, say Bible agencies

**AMSTERDAM (REC)** — The Forum of Bible Agencies drew together an unusual conference in the Netherlands in April. In 1989, at a workshop of the Lausanne II conference in Manila, leaders of Bible agencies realized that the Bible was no longer central even in the evangelical churches. The result of that meeting was the creation of the Forum of Bible Agencies,

a group of 10 international agencies. In a meeting a few years later, the forum decided to host a world consultation to define the problems and search for solutions.

Over 200 persons from about 60 countries gathered for five days of meetings. The meetings were structured to gather information from the participants in many different ways. In addition

to plenary addresses by well-known evangelicals such as John Stott, Tom Houston, Luis Palau, Michael Green and Tokumobu Adeyemo, participants joined small groups, attended workshops and filled out several questionnaires about aspects of Bible work and the course of the conference.

### Serious situation

The conference theme was "Living Word for a Dying World." In one sense, the theme addressed itself to Western culture. Some participants felt that the "Dying World" was the First World, which is decaying due to rapid secularization. Other evangelicals interpreted the phrase in a more abstract sense,

namely, that the world is always dying apart from Christ.

The other side of the coin of secularization is the marginalization of Scripture. The forum came together on this problem and presented it in several ways at the conference. There were attempts to define Biblical literacy and there were struggles to define different aspects of the Word of God, only one of which is the Word written.

Dr. Dan Beebe of England raised the question of whether the Bible and Scripture were the same thing. He suggested that in Western universities, only the Bible — a book used by Christians — was taught. The Scripture, an authoritative revelation,

has not been taken seriously in the West for 200 years, Beebe argued. Whether the Bible agencies could make the churches engage these problems is a challenge the conference left for them.

Bible agencies have traditionally avoided theology. They have appealed to a broad spectrum of Christians, because they have kept their focus simply and directly on the book.

In a final statement the conference leadership acknowledged the importance of the Word lived out in the community of love, Christ's Body. They also pledged to consider additional research in communications, hermeneutics and literacy.

## Christians finally learn: laughter's the best medicine

**Marian Van Til**

**NEW YORK** — Do you have childhood (or even recent) memories of church being "boring"? Do you know Christians who seem to think that having fun is incompatible with their faith, or who worry, as H.L. Mencken put it, that "someone, somewhere is having a good time"?

It seems a lot of people have gotten the impression that Christianity isn't much fun. So to counter that impression and bring the message that the gospel means joy, not drudgery, a lot of Christians are turning to humor.

For example, the Fellowship of Merry Christians, founded in 1986 in the U.S. with just 250 members now has 10,000 members, reports the Associated Press (AP). And a harried group of clergy who find healing in humor call themselves, with tongues firmly planted in cheeks, the Association of Battered Clergy. The association was founded by a Lutheran pastor to help clergy through some of the hazards of their jobs — with large doses of humor.

Many churches are taking a lighter approach both in worship and in other programs because they're concerned that young people find church dull

and are leaving the church. Christians are increasingly aware that laughter — in church as well as elsewhere — is a good gift from God and is an expression of the joy of faith.

### Laughter is a calling

Says former Churches of Christ pastor-turned-comic George Goldtrap of Madison, Tennessee, "We came from an almost puritanical type of attitude: if it's fun, it must be wrong. We've come almost 180 degrees, to the point

where a positive mental attitude and a positive, happy demeanor is critical to one's spiritual welfare."

Then there's Sister Mary Christelle McAluso who feels she has a calling as a kind of stand-up comic for Christian audiences. As "the Fun Nun" she might be found with "60 dour-faced Presbyterians"; she'll "have them touch their knees and toes together, stick their tongues out and sway back and forth, all the while warbling 'Singin' in the Rain,'" reports

David Briggs of AP. McAluso and a group of 4,000 religious educators had a great time recently when she inducted the whole lot of them into her "Order of the Fun Nun."

McAluso of course avoids what seems to be the staples of a lot of secular comics: cruelty, profanity and cynicism. She says she favors a brand of humor that "encourages people to find joy in the human condition, laughing along with each other."

# What is a redeemed family like?

**Open families take the skeletons out of the closet**

## Mary VanderVennen

In my counselling work I see the power of family bonds both for good and for evil. I use the word "bonds" advisedly. I see that indeed the sins of the fathers and mothers are visited on the children to the third and fourth generation. But I also sometimes stand in awe at the beauty and the power of those generational and familial bonds.

So I am not a Pollyanna, but neither do I despair. Nor do I just want to present a litany of "ain't it awful" examples. But I'd like to present what I believe to be a biblical concept of family, and together with you praise God for, and celebrate family whenever and wherever we find it living out this vision.

Let's look at family under four headings: Created, Fallen, Redeemed and Superseded.

### Created.

Male and female God created them, in his image. God created man and woman to be in a relationship of complementarity, of equal worth and equal status, and he gave them a task to carry out jointly, using their complementary gifts, qualities and skills. Their task was to "be fruitful and multiply," to develop the creation in ways that would maintain harmony and well-being between God and his whole creation and would pass on the task to future generations.

### Fallen.

We don't know how long the period of time between Genesis 2 and 3 was. But we know what happened eventually. Sin entered the world. Adam and Eve rejected their identities as creatures and brought alienation into the world — alienation from God, from creation and from each other. And the curse pronounced on sin directly affected family relationships.

The woman is told she will have pain in childbirth and further that "your desire shall be to your husband and he shall rule over you." No more complementarity, equal status, equal worth in a fallen creation.

Some of the consequences for family life are that women tend to take their identity from men, or from a man. Women tend to

enmesh, bury themselves in relationships, take on too much responsibility for them with a resulting lack of self-respect and sense of personhood. Women who are living out of the curse tend to lack a sense of personal accountability and personal direction.

Men who are living out of the curse dominate. They do indeed "rule." They reduce women (and children) to possessions, to objects over which they have power. This power relationship became institutionalized in patriarchy. In Old Testament times God used the patriarchal system in terms of the covenant passing through the male line. The covenant sign of circumcision was for males only. But even in the Old Testament there are signs of things to come.

### Redeemed.

The good news is that the family has been redeemed. Christ's birth, his life, and his death and resurrection totally turned that patriarchal structure upside down. Can you imagine anything more profoundly revolutionary than to have God himself, the ruler and king of the universe, become a helpless baby, bypassing completely the normal contribution of a man to the birth, being completely dependent on a woman? Do you see the profound symbolism of that?

But it's more than symbolism: Mary, a flesh-and-blood mother, and Jesus, an infant, growing in relationship to each other, with the infant for a time



children to dignity and worth. "Except you become as a little child...."

Unfortunately it has taken us over 2,000 years to begin to catch on to the meaning of what Jesus said and did in this regard. For much too long the church has promoted a vision of marriage and family that much

able, based on the gifts and strengths of the partners and on the life circumstances. The partners are interdependent, mutually submissive to each other and together to Christ.

Authority is recognized as derived from God and given to both parents, not just the father.

Power is "enabling" power. Children are recognized as unique individuals, whose differing gifts are recognized with respect and encouragement.

Boundaries and limits are clear and explicit, and consequences for misbehavior are clear and appropriate to the age of the child as well as to the offense. And punishment is clearly for the offence, not an attack on the worth or personhood of the child. We need to recover the meaning of the word discipline — not just punishment, but also building up a child's sense of worth and place in the immediate family, and eventually in the larger family of God and in society.

Communication is open and clear. There is "love-talk."

There is discussion of problems and negotiation rather than decisions handed down by the husband/father with no questions asked. Family history, including the skeletons in the closet, is open and explored by way of stories, pictures, reminiscences.

The redeemed family has a vision which extends beyond its immediate boundaries. The redeemed family recognizes that it is part of the larger family of God. Family as family has a calling to play its part in carrying out the original mandate in Genesis: to care for and develop creation and society, and to serve. Children need the example of parents and adults in this, and parents need to help their children join them and develop their own vision.

Part of the visioning is knowing the history of the family of God. We need to hear the stories of the Bible, of the faith, of the community of faith to which we and our children

**"We must not make a neat distinction between non-Christian and Christian families."**



completely dependent on his mother. That's real.

Jesus, in his life and ministry, death and resurrection, restored women to dignity and worth. He taught them something that was unheard of in his day. He revealed himself to them more clearly than to his disciples (think of the Samaritan woman). He showed himself to women first after his resurrection. And Jesus restored

too closely resembled a fallen, broken, patriarchal family structure.

So what are some characteristics of a redeemed family structure?

The marriage is a partnership, held together by a covenant between equal partners who both recognize that they are accountable to God who is the perfect covenant keeper. Roles are interchanged

*Continued on p.12...*

JUNE 10, 1994

## Features

# The homosexual movement

(10)

*A response by the Ramsey Colloquium*

*The gay and lesbian movement is seeking radical changes in social behavior, religion, morality and law. Just recently the government of Ontario introduced a bill that would grant all the rights of a family to same-sex couples.*

*Several US Jewish and Christian theologians, ethicists, philosophers and scholars, known as the Ramsey Colloquium, have written a careful and sensitive response to what they consider a dangerous development. It appeared in the March 1994 issue of First Things, "a monthly journal of religion and public life."*

*Although the article is more scholarly than the usual fare in CC, we thought it important enough to publish while the debate is raging. We reprint most of it here in three installments, with permission from the editor of First Things.*

Homosexual behavior is a phenomenon

with a long history, to which there have been various cultural and moral responses. But today in our public life there is something new which demands our attention and deserves a careful moral response.

The new thing is a gay and lesbian movement that aggressively proposes radical changes in public policy. We share the uneasiness of most North Americans with the proposals advanced by the gay and lesbian movement, and we seek to articulate reasons for the largely intuitive and pre-articulate anxiety of most regarding homosexuality and its increasing impact on our public life.

#### The sexual revolution

While the gay and lesbian movement is indeed a new thing, its way was prepared by, and it is in large part a logical extension of, what has been called the "sexual revolution." The understanding of marriage and family once considered normative is very commonly dishonored in our society and, too frequently, in our communities of faith. Religious communities and leaderships have been, and in too many cases remain, deeply complicit in the demeaning of social norms essential to human flourishing.

Thus moral criticism of the homosexual world and movement is unbalanced, unfair and implausible if it is not, at the same time, criticism of attitudes

and behaviors that have debased heterosexual relations. The gay and lesbian insurgency has raised a sharp moral challenge to the hypocrisy and decadence of our culture. In the light of widespread changes in sexual mores, some homosexuals understandably protest that the sexual licence extended to "straights" cannot be denied to them.

We believe that any understanding of sexuality, including heterosexuality, that makes it chiefly an arena for the satisfaction of personal desire is harmful to individuals and society. Any way of life that accepts or encourages sexual relations for pleasure or personal satisfaction alone turns away from the disciplined community that marriage is intended to engender and foster.

#### Loss of integrity

Religious communities that have in recent decades winked at promiscuity (even among the clergy), that have solemnly repeated marriage vows that their own congregations do not take seriously, and that have failed to concern themselves with the devastating effects of divorce upon children cannot with integrity condemn homosexual behavior unless they are also willing to reassert the heterosexual norm more believably and effectively in their pastoral care.

In other words, those determined to resist the gay and les-

bian movement must be equally concerned for the renewal of integrity, in teaching and practice, regarding "traditional sexual ethics."

It is a testimony to the perjuring role of religion in American life that many within the gay and lesbian movement seek the blessing of religious institutions. The movement correctly perceives that attaining such formal approbation — through, for example, the content and style of seminary education and the ordination of practising homosexuals — will give it an effective hold upon the primary institutions of moral legitimization in our popular culture. The movement also correctly perceives that our churches and synagogues have typically been inarticulate and unpersuasive in offering reasons for withholding the blessing that is sought.

#### Failure of pastoral care

One reason for the discomfort of religious leaders in the face of this new movement is that past and continuing failure to offer supportive and knowledgeable pastoral care to persons coping with the problems of their homosexuality.

Without condoning homo-

genital acts, it is necessary to recognize that many such persons are, with fear and trembling, seeking as best as they can to live lives pleasing to God and in service to others. Confronted by the vexing ambiguities of *eros* in human life, religious communities should be better equipped to support people in their struggle, recognizing that we all fall short of the vocation to holiness of life.

#### We're not defined by.....

The sexual revolution is motored by presuppositions that can and ought to be effectively challenged. Perhaps the key presupposition of the revolution is that human health and flourishing require that sexual desire, understood as a "need," be acted upon and satisfied. Any discipline of denial or restraint has been popularly depicted as unhealthy and dehumanizing. We insist, however, that it is dehumanizing to define ourselves, or our personhood as male and female, by our desires alone. Nor does it seem plausible to suggest that what millennia of human experience have taught us to regard as self-command should now be dismissed as mere repression.

At the same time that the place of sex has been grotesquely exaggerated by the sexual revolution, it has also been

trivialized. The mysteries of human sexuality are commonly reduced to matters of recreation or taste, not unlike one's preferences in diet, dress or sport.

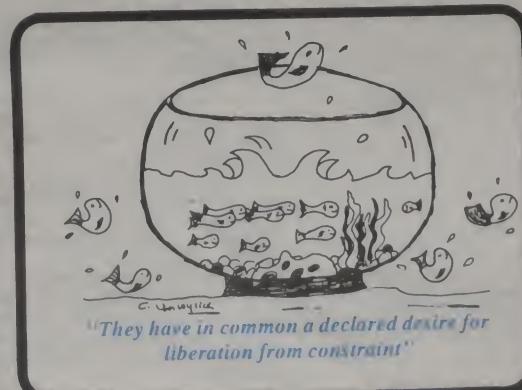
This peculiar mix of the exaggerated and the trivialized makes it possible for the gay and lesbian movement to demand, simultaneously, a respect for what is claimed to be most importantly and constitutively true of homosexuals, and tolerance for what is, after all, simply a difference in "life-style."

#### False doctrine of autonomous self

It is important to recognize the linkages among the component parts of the sexual revolution. Permissive abortion, widespread adultery, easy divorce, radical feminism and the gay and lesbian movement have not by accident appeared at the same historical moment. They have in common a declared desire for liberation from constraint — especially constraints associated with an allegedly oppressive culture and religious tradition. They also have in common the presuppositions that the body is little more than an instrument for the fulfilment of desire, and that the essence of the self...

On biblical and philosophical grounds, we reject this radical dualism between the self and the body. Our bodies have their own dignity, bear their own truths and are participant in our personhood in a fundamental way.

This constellation of movements, of which the gay movement is part, rests upon an anthropological doctrine of the autonomous self. With respect to abortion and the socialization of sexuality, this anthropology has gone a long way toward entrenching itself in the jurisprudence of our society as well as in popular habits of mind and behavior. We believe it is a false doctrine that leads neither to individual flourishing nor to social well-being.



## Advice/News

# 'Come out of the closet? Are you kidding?

Dear P&M:

I first read Dr. James De Jong's article "Christian Identity and 'Coming Out of the Closet'" in CTS in Focus, Winter 1993-94. CC reprinted it in the April 1 issue. I thought it was basically biblical. It was certainly in line with the report on homosexuality which the Christian Reformed Synod 1973 adopted. My disappointment was that he gives only room in the church to "chaste and celibate homosexuals."

He does not allow for any struggle with the obvious identity problems that most of us go through after we find ourselves faced with our homosexual orientation. At least not within the context of the church. I wondered at the time whether Dr. De Jong had ever actually talked to a homosexual Christian and had tried to understand his or her personal struggle. He makes it sound like "have your struggles first out of our view, and if you come out chaste and celibate you may rejoin the CRC." An impossible expectation.

On the next page of the same CTS in Focus Dr. Calvin Van Reken wrote under the heading "Homosexuality and the Church" about the church's response. He also, leading his president, referred to the 1973 report and said nothing new. Having struggled with my own



sexual identity for the last 35 years or so, I remember having a great sense of hope and relief when I first read that report 21 years ago.

The sad thing is that the theory was great at the time, but few practical changes followed. I still hear ministers preach indiscriminately against homosexuality. I cringe and think, "I'm glad nobody in this congregation knows about my problem." I feel safe with the friends in whom I have confided but am glad that I have stayed in the closet. At the same time I see people who struggle with this leave the CRC.

Many have concluded that their sexual identity was apparently not going to change — much as they tried. I should add. I don't think there is anyone, Christian or not, who has accepted his or her homosexual orientation without a serious struggle. Do you really believe anybody, especially a teenager, wants to be "different"? But all you ever hear the church say is: "Homosexuality is sinful"; "Homosexuals don't go to heaven." So some of us have turned our backs on our (non-responsive) church -- quietly, without saying why. And so officially the rest of the church never knew.

Some homosexuals, desperately wanting to hang on to the Christian gospel, joined the

(all-gay) Metropolitan Community Church. I understand their choice. For me it is not the answer. Others dropped out of organized religion altogether, and maybe, in the process, turned their backs on God. I think that we, the CRC, could have prevented at least some of them from doing so.

In their responses in your April 22 issue, George Vandervelde, Gerald Vandenzande and the Tenyenhuisen all question De Jong's conclusions about support groups. Struggling with homosexuality myself, I have lots of understanding and sympathy for Christian brothers and sisters in the same predicament who end up with all kinds of conclusions on how to deal with their problem. The church has not been very helpful, actually.

As for myself, I have joined an A.A.-type 12-step group for people with all kinds of sexual addictions. Although the group is not Christian per se, their definition of "sobriety" is utterly biblical. It is stricter than many of your readers,

heterosexual or homosexual, could imagine. But I'm tremendously grateful to God to have found this support group. (It has chapters all over North America.) Acceptance, understanding and the opportunity to talk about my struggles is certainly what I need: long live support groups.

The group helps me develop my understanding. It helps me face temptations and resist them. Support groups are a biblical response. Confessing your sins to each other; going to the "elders" (i.e., those wiser and more experienced in matters you struggle with); praying for each other, are all instructions God gives us in his Word.

Now, more specifically about coming out of the closet. CC's headline over John and June Tenyenhuisen's letter was misleading. They didn't say "It's good to come out of the closet." They wrote "it would be good if they could — so that there would not have to be secret lives and we could share each other's burdens in our identity in Christ."

Do I want to come out of the closet? Are you kidding? Especially not with public fanfare. Where would that leave me in the CRC? What about my wife and children? No, I'll struggle in absolute secrecy. But I keep praying that God will lead our church into more compassionate and biblical responses to people with my problem.

## Dear Struggling with Homosexuality:

Thank you for a helpful letter which pleads with us to bridge the theory of 1973's synodical report and your practical needs.

We, too, celebrate the existence of 12-step support groups. They provide safe places for honest confession and real understanding. You have found a group that helps you battle temptation. That is certainly preferable to one that supports the gay lifestyle.

You must be exhausted by your 35-year battle. Our hearts go out to you as well as your wife and children who are probably profoundly affected by your secret struggle.

Free feel to write us again. All of us need to understand you better, so that we can recognize each other as fellow strugglers with sin and equal beneficiaries of Christ's salvation.

**Write to: P&M**  
c/o Christian Courier  
4-261 Martindale Road  
St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1

*Peter and Marja Slofstra are a junior and wife team living in St. Catharines, Ont. They are assisted by an advisory panel consisting of Herman de Jong, Bill Lulake, Tom Zeyl, Irene Bom, Marian Van Til and Bert Witvoet.*

## What is a redeemed family like?

*...continued from p. 10*

belong, of contemporary heroines and heroes who are living out the vision. No family can do all this on its own. We need other families in the community of faith to help us with this.

We must not make a neat distinction between non-Christian and Christian families, as though the non-Christian family belongs to the fallen structure as I have defined it, and the Christian family to the redeemed. There are families whose members are Christians but who live out the fallen structure. And there are families who are not Christian whose family life much more closely resembles the redeemed family structure.

4. **Superseded.** Even though the family was created by God before sin entered the world, and even though family is the

most basic unit of society, Jesus tells us that the family has been superseded in the plan of redemption.

Jesus emphasizes the priority of the kingdom of God over even family. "Whoever does the will of my Father in Heaven is my mother, brother, sister." The Apostle Paul, writing in the very precarious situation of Christians in the first century, says that some may have to remain celibate for the advancement of the kingdom.

But there is good news — empowering news for all of us in the gospel, empowering especially for those among us who have had a very painful and destructive experience with family.

Family is not ultimately the source of our identity. In the Gospel of Luke, when the Sadducees came to Jesus with their trick question about the woman

whose seven husbands have died and ask who she will be married to in the resurrection, Jesus makes a powerful statement: "The people of this age marry and are given in marriage. But those who are considered worthy of taking part in that age and in the resurrection from the dead will neither marry nor be given in marriage, and they can no longer die; for they are like the angels. They are God's children, since they are children of the resurrection."

That is the identity of all of us who belong to God. We are sons and daughters of the resurrection. Thanks be to God!

*Mary Wunder-Vennen is a therapist and director of professional services at Christian Counselling Services in Toronto.*

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# Are you a sucker for advertising?

You are if you're a TV junkie

I might as well say it right now: I have a tremendous dislike for television. Yes, I admit that we have such a device at home but, believe me, I watch it very little. The thing that gets me in particular is that whether I watch TV or not, I and everybody else in the country pay \$30 per month in extra charges on many things we buy in order to finance the advertising that appears on the screens that dominate most households much of the day and night.

Basically, television is not a tool to deliver entertainment and information, but it is an enormous industry with the sole purpose to entice us to watch commercials. Entertainment and information are only the bait. Television's real mission is to sell us soap and suds and cereal.

A while ago I received a looney in the mail together with an invitation to record my TV viewing time for one week. I dutifully obliged and logged one hour on our 12-year-old 12-

inch model, the first and only set we have ever owned, bought after our five children had grown up. (By not having a TV for our children we, by the grace of God, managed to preserve their creativity.) That TV-viewing booklet I filled in alerted me to the fact that when I watch TV I am investing time that is sold to an advertiser. The more I watch, the more the stations can charge the advertisers. Imagine! My time is sold so that others with whom I totally disagree can benefit financially.

### TV depresses

If you watch a lot of TV then research has shown you are more likely to be overweight, inactive, hostile and depressed; and chances are you smoke a lot.

Why is TV watching depressing? Because it robs us of opportunities to talk and read and learn. Relationships among family members and marriage partners are nurtured on com-

munication. TV watching steals the time it takes to build and enjoy relationships and is a contributing cause of marriage break-ups and family breakdowns. Television robs us of the essence of being human and that is a depressing experience.

I have other misgivings about TV. When I watch a newscast I know the editor determines what is newsworthy. I do not have a choice of seeing what is important to me. A newspaper gives me that choice. So I read papers and magazines, where from the assembled material, can choose what interests me. If you watch network TV for information on the world, you are wasting your time. What you see is not the news but carefully packaged 20-minute shows that are expertly prepared to encourage feeling, not thought.

### Develop couch potatoes

These pictures, mostly of suffering and indignities, are often edited or staged with the soul

purpose of being sensational. Thus they answer the basic aim of television: to be an entertaining merchandising tool, both for itself and for the clients who make the program possible.

When we succumb to television's seductive channels of passivity, we obstruct our own currents of creativity from flowing freely. Most of us avoid saturated fats to prevent heart disease and premature death. How much more must we shun television-induced cholesterol that causes the hardening of our mental and spiritual arteries.

The Bible refers to eyes which cause us to sin and reminds us that it is better to live with diminished eyesight than for our entire body and soul to suffer. Jesus warns against forces that kill the soul. To me, television, because of its real mission, must be treated



With the utmost discretion and be watched very sparingly, if at all.

*Bert Hielema confesses to watching TV movies at times and the odd hockey match where Toronto is involved. The Blue Jays? Not so far He lives in Tweed. Ont., beyond the reach of cable TV*

## What I learned in a Beijing liquor store

### Eric Hagt

During the spring vacation, in lieu of trekking to remote and exotic regions in China for adventure, I opted to work for a few days as perhaps the only foreign sales clerk in all of China. Admittedly not as exciting as the former, being employed in a government-operated store was undoubtedly equally educational. My mission was to acquire some insight into the working life of the "proletariat" in China's capital.

Those having experienced the finer qualities of China's state-run service and consumer industry will confirm the generalization that clerks range from uncooperative to downright rude. I wondered about the roots of that problem.

"It's simple," said one clerk. "My salary is fixed, as is my position in the company, regardless of performance. Chances of promotion and demotion are rare; consequently there's little incentive."

This attitude seemed counterproductive to China's increasingly market economy. It certainly goes against Economics 101 for basic com-



Eric Hagt learned about Chinese spirits and economics in a Beijing liquor store.

petition and the most effective utilization of human resources.

When I dug a little deeper, the manager set me straight. "Only in the past few years have a minority of jobs been self-acquired," he said. "Regardless of rank or location, everyone is assigned a work unit. No choosing, no remitting. If you've been consigned to serve as a clerk in a department store you'd better put on your uniform and name tag. The career of an average citizen is inevitably static. Even though I'm the manager, it's not in my

power to hire and fire. Job regulation is controlled by a higher central labor department. I just do my best to oversee the business aspect of the company. To add fuel to the fire, some employees get jobs through connections high up. As a result, I have to watch my step with these 'special employees.' It is an inefficient system. Change is a must, but the problems are deep and not easily uprooted."

### Too many clerks

As I worked in the store, it

soon became evident to me that there was an overabundance of clerks in the store. Where one salesperson would do, there would be three or four. Each had their own defined area and responsibility. Helping other employees was discouraged. Once I was even reprimanded for assisting the busier clerk beside me. My guess is that approximately 70 per cent of the clerks did virtually nothing all day. It seemed obvious why so many state-owned businesses in China take a loss. Why not be more competitive, cut the labor force and give the manager more power to allow for maximum efficiency?

Proposing my new economic policy elicited various reactions. Responses invariably underscored the issue of population. Because of excessive population in any given area unemployment is an ever present problem. In a period between October and December of 1993 alone, 10,000 jobless peasants arrived in Beijing seeking work.

The four per cent unemployment rate may seem relatively low in terms of percentage, but the actual number of people it represents is rather frightening.

With virtually no social benefits life becomes a matter of survival. In this scenario crime is a very tempting morsel.

### Simple arithmetic

Unemployment only serves to exacerbate the already soaring crime rate. One co-worker put it bluntly: "The arithmetic is simple; would you rather have five employed clerks at a subsistence standard of living or one well-to-do clerk with four unemployed?" Undoubtedly the system resists change and its problems are not easily solvable.

My short apprenticeship in the liquor section of a state-operated department store taught me not only a great deal about potent Chinese spirits but also about the Chinese economic infrastructure. Due to its population, China holds a huge market and labor force. But this factor which China vaunts as its greatest asset is also its greatest burden as it rushes into the 21st century.

*Eric Hagt went to China last year and is still living there. He is originally from St. Catharines, Ont.*

## Classifieds

Classified Rates	Thank You	Births	Birthdays	Anniversaries
<p><b>Births</b> \$25.00  <b>Messages &amp; Engagements</b> \$40.00  <b>Anniversaries</b> \$45.00  <b>2-column anniversaries</b> \$90.00  <b>Obituaries</b> \$45.00  <b>Notes of thanks</b> \$35.00  <b>Birthdays</b> \$40.00  <b>All other one-column classified advertisements</b> \$13.50 per column inch. NOTE Minimum fee is \$25.00.  <b>Letter under file number</b> \$35.00  <b>extra Photos</b> \$25.00 additional charge  <b>Note:</b> All rates shown above are GST inclusive  <b>ATTENTION!</b>  a) Christian Courier reserves the right to print classifieds using our usual format,  b) A sheet with information about an obituary sent by funeral homes is not acceptable since it leads to errors and confusion.  c) Photographs sent by fax are not acceptable. If you wish a photo included, send us the original.  d) Christian Courier will not be responsible for any errors due to handwritten or phoned-in advertisements.  e) The rate shown above for classifieds covers any length up to six column inches. Christian Courier reserves the right to charge for additional column inches at the rate of \$13.50 per column inch (GST incl.).  <b>NEWLYWEDS &amp; NEW PARENTS</b> We offer a one-year subscription for only \$20.00 (GST incl.) to the couples whose wedding is announced in the Christian Courier and to the parents of the child whose birth announcement appears in our paper. To facilitate matters, we encourage those who request the wedding or birth announcement to enclose \$20.00 and the couple's correct address.  <b>Christian Courier</b>  4-261 Martindale Rd  St Catharines, ON L2W 1A1  Phone: (905) 682-8311  Fax (905) 682-8313 </p>	<p><b>DE YOUNG:</b>  We thank the Lord for His goodness shown us during our 50th wedding anniversary. We thank everyone for the friendship shown us through a handshake, cards, flowers and presents.  May God bless you all.  Jettje and John de Young and family.</p>	<p><b>VAN STRATEN:</b>  "For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well. My frame was not hidden from you when I was in the secret place, when I was woven together in the depths of the earth, your eyes saw my unformed body. All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be" (Ps. 139:13-16).  With great joy we welcome the early arrival of</p>	<p><b>OMA BOOY:</b>  "The steadfast love of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting, upon those who fear Him, and His righteousness to children's children, to those who keep His covenant and remember to do His commandments" (Ps. 103:17,18).  We rejoice with our mother, grandmother and great-grandmother</p>	<p>1954 June 12 1994  I will guide thee with mine eyes" (Ps. 32:8b).  With thankfulness to God we announce with joy the 40th wedding anniversary of our parents and grandparents</p>
	<p><b>Births</b></p>		<p><b>BRANDON JOEL</b>  born on March 22, 1994, weighing in at 1 lb., 15 oz., length of 37.5 cm. Given by God, to be loved and nurtured by parents Marcel and Bev Van Straten (nee Janssen). It is with thankfulness to God that we announce Brandon now weighs 5 lbs., 5 oz., length of 45 cm. We are delighted to welcome him home! Proud grandparents are Gus and Fenny Van Straten of Woodstock, Ont., and George and Ida Janssen of Tillsonburg, Ont.  Home address: 13 Rodgers St., Tillsonburg, ON N4G 1G1</p>	<p><b>IKE and NELLY CAHAIS</b>  (nee HEERINGA)</p>
				<p>Thank you mom and dad for always having time for us. Your unselfish love has been a true inspiration to all of your children and grandchildren. Congratulations and love from Case, Joshua, Jordan — Vancouver Teresa, Rob, Michael, David, Matthew — Pickering Andrew — Vancouver Yvonne, Jim, Joey — Pontypool Address: 862 Sheppard Ave., Pickering, ON L1V 1G5</p>
				<p>With heartfelt thanks to God, our merciful Father, we would like to announce the 40th wedding anniversary of our parents and grandparents</p>
			<p><b>CORNELIS VANDYK</b>  on June 20, 1994.  Praise God for giving him good health and a keen mind. Happy Birthday Dad, Opa.  With love from your children:  Gary &amp; Audrey VanDyk — St Catharines</p>	<p><b>FRANK and EDZIENA MONSTER</b>  (nee SCHUILENGA)</p>
			<p>Tom &amp; Lina Zylstra — Glen Morris  Harry &amp; Nienke VanDyk — Hamilton  Homer &amp; Joann Bruinsma — St. Catharines</p>	<p>Congratulations and love from:  Metyl &amp; Isaac Sevenma — Drachten, the Netherlands</p>
			<p>John &amp; Audrey VanDyk — Kitchener  Charles VanDyk — Kitchener  Gerard &amp; Nellie VanDyk — Cambridge  grandchildren and great-grandchildren</p>	<p>Mark, Frans, Angela, Elana  John &amp; Janice Monster — Hampton, Ont.</p>
			<p>Address: C VanDyk, 12 Bartlett Ave., Grimsby, ON L3M 4N5</p>	<p>Shawn, Kristin, Joshua, Laura, Danielle</p>
				<p>Rob &amp; Joanne Monster — Clarkson, Ont.</p>
				<p>Jonathon, Kate, ?</p>
				<p>Angela &amp; Bill De Vries — Newmarket, Ont.</p>
				<p>Nicole, David, Michael, Lisa</p>
				<p>Strathroy Richmond Hill  1959 June 10 1994  We, the children and grandchildren of</p>
				<p><b>ALBERT and MARTHA TAMMING</b>  (LUNKER)</p>
				<p>announce, with thanksgiving, the celebration of 35 years of marriage for Dad and Mom Opa and Oma. We thank God for you, for the encouragement, support, love and example you have shown to us. Our prayer is that, as you once again settle into a new home, God will be your strength and shield at all times and in all ways. May the words of your wedding text continue to be your guide: "And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him" (Col. 3:17).</p>
				<p>Bonnie &amp; Chris Desjardins — Eganville, Ont.</p>
				<p>Jessica John &amp; Eleanor Tamming — Medford, Ont.</p>
				<p>Katie-Beth Annalise, John Mark Joanne Tamming &amp; Bruce Voogd — Toronto, Ont.</p>
				<p>Gary &amp; Rose Tamming — Franklin, Ont.</p>
				<p>Jason, Spencer David Tamming — Huntsville, Ont.</p>
				<p>New home address: 70 Bay Blvd., Apt. 605, Richmond Hill, ON L4L 5L2</p>
<b>Marriages</b>				
<p><b>BROUWER-HOGETERP:</b>  Believing that the Lord has brought them together we, Jim and Tony Brouwer and Ted and Betty Hogeterp rejoice in announcing the forthcoming marriage of their children</p> <p><b>BERTINA</b>  and  ERIC</p> <p>The ceremony will take place the Lord willing, on Saturday June 18, 1994 at 1:30 p.m. at Grace Chr Ref Church, Chatham, Ont.</p>		<p><b>BROER GERRIT ADEMA</b>  and  <b>GRIETJE BIJZITTER</b></p> <p>We children bless and salute you.</p> <p>Henny  Pet  Allan  Martin  Andy  Jenny  Henry  Ria</p> <p>spouses, 25 grandchildren and 30 great-grandchildren</p> <p>Open house on July 9, 1994, from 2-4 p.m. Immanuel Chr Ref Church, 53 Church St E Brampton, Ont.</p> <p>Home address: 53 Church St E Apt 608, Brampton, ON L6V 1G2</p>	<p>Town of Mount Royal Westmount  1954 July 3 1994</p> <p>With thankfulness to God, we celebrate with joy the 40th wedding anniversary of our parents and grandparents</p> <p><b>FRED and MARTINA DROK</b>  (nee VERMEY)</p> <p>We thank God for the countless blessings He has bestowed on you and your marriage and pray that God will continue to bless you for many more years</p> <p>With love from  Dave &amp; Belinda Drok — Barrie, Ont.  Knotten, Rachelle</p> <p>Home address: 4998 de Maisonneuve #619, Westmount, QC H3Z 1N2</p>	<p><b>MAURICE and SOPHIA GULDENMOND</b>  (nee VAN DER SPEK)</p> <p>We pray that the Lord will grant them many more blessed years together</p> <p>Congratulations, with much love  Adrian &amp; Mary Guldemon — Lynden, Ont.</p> <p>Marcel, Lauren, Wesley, Vanessa Conny &amp; David Hargrave — Nanaimo, B.C.  Madeline</p> <p>Marieette &amp; Walter Raybould — Ancaster, Ont.</p> <p>Alexander, Katherine</p> <p>John &amp; Glona Guldemon — Waterloo, Ont.</p> <p>Amanda, Bradley, Kalyna</p> <p>Home address: 175 Fiddler's Green Rd., Unit 56, Ancaster, ON L9G 4X7</p>

## Classifieds

Anniversaries	Anniversaries	Anniversaries	Anniversaries	Anniversaries	
<p>1959 June 13 1994 "Cast all your anxiety on Him for He cares for you" (1 Peter 5:7) We praise God for our parents KOOP and JANNY MULDER (nee MIDDELJANS) whose commitment to God and each other through the many good times and difficult ones have touched many lives for our Savior. We, as their children and grandchildren, consider it a privilege to call them Mom and Dad, Oma and Opa. With love, John (in heaven, 1971) Henrietta — Brampton Jeanette &amp; Jack VanLeeuwen — Bracebridge Luke, Kristen Benjamin Address: R.R. #6, Moore Road, Bracebridge, ON P1L 1X4</p>	<p>"O glorify the Lord with us, let us exalt His name together" (Ps. 34:3)</p> <p>With praise and thankfulness to our heavenly Father, we hope to celebrate the 25th wedding anniversary of our parents DAVE and TINA VANDERWIER Your thankful children: Jamie &amp; Christine — Scarborough Lorraine &amp; Ben Lunshof (lance) — Wellandport</p> <p>Timothy — Wellandport Nathaniel — Wellandport Tammy — Wellandport Sarah — Wellandport</p> <p>We invite friends and family to an open house, to be held in the Wellandport Chr. School Gym on June 11, 1994, from 1:30-4:30 p.m. Best wishes only. Home address: 975 Port Davidson Rd., R.R. #3, Wellandport, ON L0R 2J0</p>	<p>1944 June 16 1994 We praise God for our parents and grandparents KORNELIS and JANTJE VORDING (nee SCHIPPER) who hope to celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary. The Lord has blessed them throughout their married life. Congratulations and love from: Ralph &amp; Joanne Vording — Belmont, Ont Cindy &amp; Richard, Jim, Jennifer &amp; Chris, Wendy John &amp; Ineke Vording — Sharon, Ont. Matthew, Luke Jack Vording — Woodstock, Ont. Estelle Vording — Woodstock, Ont. Marc, Darryl Bill &amp; Lin Vording — Embro, Ont. Scott, Steven, Shawn, Tim, Christy Luke &amp; Cecile Vording — Eastwood, Ont. Danielle, Michelle, Monique, Glenn Jane &amp; Herman House — Sweaburg, Ont.</p>		<p>Congratulations to Kornelis and Jantje Vording on the occasion of their 50th anniversary!</p>	
<p>Calgary Vancouver 1954 July 3 1994 With praise and thanksgiving to God we celebrate the 40th wedding anniversary of our parents and grandparents JOHAN and NELL SCHIPPER (DEJONG)</p> <p>With love from: Johan &amp; Freda Loeve Peter, Joshua, Stefan, Joel John &amp; Frances Schipper Matthew, Alicia, David Ink &amp; Cathy Mallie Christa, Rebecca, Daniel, Hannah Home address: 2647 East 5th Ave., Vancouver, BC V5M 1N1</p>	<p>Brampton Beamsville 1964 1994 On June 5, 1994, CEUS and NELLY WESTERHOFF celebrated their 30th wedding anniversary.</p> <p>We, their children and grandchildren, praise and thank God for His faithfulness and for His presence in their lives. It is our prayer that God will bless you with many more years together! Melinda &amp; Andrew Regnerus Cassandra, Andrew James Kendrick &amp; Elizabeth Westerhoff Aannah, Sarah Jennifer Westerhoff Trevor Westerhoff</p>	<p>March 11, 1994 - May 20, 1994 Safe in the arms of Jesus. At the tender age of two months BRANDON JOSHUA EYZENGA was suddenly taken to his eternal home.</p> <p>Parents Ed and Pauline Eyzenga (Van Ravenstyn). Sister Tanya. Grandparents Sophy and Chris Eyzenga and Judy and Adnan Van Ravenstyn. "The eternal God is your refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms" (Deut. 33:27).</p> <p>Correspondence address: 45361 McIntosh Drive, Chilliwack, BC V2P 6V4</p>	<h3>Obituaries</h3> <p>March 11, 1994 - May 20, 1994 Safe in the arms of Jesus. At the tender age of two months BRANDON JOSHUA EYZENGA was suddenly taken to his eternal home.</p> <p>Parents Ed and Pauline Eyzenga (Van Ravenstyn). Sister Tanya. Grandparents Sophy and Chris Eyzenga and Judy and Adnan Van Ravenstyn. "The eternal God is your refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms" (Deut. 33:27).</p> <p>Correspondence address: 45361 McIntosh Drive, Chilliwack, BC V2P 6V4</p>	<h3>Obituaries</h3> <p>March 11, 1994 - May 20, 1994 Safe in the arms of Jesus. At the tender age of two months BRANDON JOSHUA EYZENGA was suddenly taken to his eternal home.</p> <p>Parents Ed and Pauline Eyzenga (Van Ravenstyn). Sister Tanya. Grandparents Sophy and Chris Eyzenga and Judy and Adnan Van Ravenstyn. "The eternal God is your refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms" (Deut. 33:27).</p> <p>Correspondence address: 45361 McIntosh Drive, Chilliwack, BC V2P 6V4</p>	
<p>1954 June 23 1994 "I will make a helper suitable for him" (Gen. 2:18). RAY and HELEN VAN DER PLOEG (nee MULLER)</p> <p>will celebrate their 40th wedding anniversary. As children and grandchildren we praise God for blessing us with these special God-fearing parents and grandparents. Congratulations and best wishes from Joyce Cunningham — Brampton, Ont. Kathleen, Elizabeth, Curtis Stewart Vander Ploeg — deceased Anita Hart — St. Thomas, Ont. Michael, Shannon Jeff Vander Ploeg — Woodstock, Ont. Jane &amp; Gerard Kuntz — Milton, Ont. Caleb Logan Colin &amp; Anita Vander Ploeg — Grand Rapids, Mich. Jonathan, Derek Gary &amp; Teresa Vander Ploeg — Hamilton, Ont. Open house at Maranatha Chr. Ref. Church, Woodstock, Ont. on June 18, 1994, from 3:30 p.m. Best wishes only please.</p>	<p>Feb. 14, 1899 - April 26, 1994 "One thing I ask of the Lord, this is what I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord forever" (Ps. 27:4). On April 26, 1994, the Lord called to Himself our dear father, grandfather and great-grandfather PIETER SPEELMAN Predeceased by his loving wife of 61 years Marjetje (Noordzy) Speelman, Maria VanDyk — St. Thomas Ronnie VanKempen — Samia Wilhelmina &amp; Jan Vanderveert — St. Thomas Martin &amp; Antonia Speelman — Mount Brydges Joanne &amp; Jan Mantel — Aylmer Ina &amp; John Hoogstra — Kerwood Lydia &amp; Walter DeRuiter — Hanover John &amp; Corne Speelman — Samia Eric &amp; Joanne Speelman — Wyoming Mary &amp; Doug Gibben — Listowel and 49 grandchildren and 52 great-grandchildren. Also survived by one brother, And Speelman, of Pernis, the Netherlands.</p> <p>The funeral service was held in the Strathroy-Westmount Chr. Ref. Church, Rev. Jack VandeHoef officiating.</p>	<p>June 10, 1950 - May 8, 1994 "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding" (Prov. 3:5). On Sunday, May 8, 1994, our Lord called home to be with him ANNE ZYLSTRA (VAN DYK) Beloved wife of Bill Zylstra Loving mother of: Michael David Robyn Correspondence address: Bill Zylstra, Box 32, R.R. #5, Forest, ON N0N 1J0</p>	<p>June 10, 1950 - May 8, 1994 "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding" (Prov. 3:5). On Sunday, May 8, 1994, our Lord called home to be with him ANNE ZYLSTRA (VAN DYK) Beloved wife of Bill Zylstra Loving mother of: Michael David Robyn Correspondence address: Bill Zylstra, Box 32, R.R. #5, Forest, ON N0N 1J0</p>	<p>Rozenburg Brantford June 8, 1917 - May 30, 1994 "Be strong and courageous, do not be afraid, for the Lord God will be with you, wherever you go" (Joshua 1:9). On Monday, May 30, 1994, the Lord called home to be with him CORNELIS GROENEWEGEN Beloved husband of Jeanette (Vanderkooy) who was his loving and caring companion for 48 years. Kees &amp; Cheryl Groenewegen — Stockton, Calif. Tine &amp; Gerry Hoogeveen — Tillsonburg Nella &amp; Butch Robinson — Brantford John &amp; Nicki Groenewegen — Guelph Bob Groenewegen &amp; Marlene Murphy — Toronto Will &amp; Gwen Groenewegen — Paris Janice &amp; Chuck Hunnissen — Guelph Art &amp; Eva Groenewegen — Woodstock Beloved grandfather of 16 grandchildren and one great-grandchild A funeral service was held on June 2, 1994, at First Ref. Church, Brantford, Ont. Correspondence address: Mrs. J. Groenewegen, R.R. #6, Brantford, ON N3T 5L8</p>	<p>Rozenburg, Z.H. Campbellville, Ont. March 7, 1914 - May 24, 1994 "The steadfast love of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon those who fear him, and his righteousness to children's children, to those who keep his covenant and remember to do his commandments" (Ps. 103:17, 18). The Lord mercifully took to himself peacefully, at the age of 80 years CORNELIS GROENEWEGEN Beloved husband of Adnana (Voorberg) Groenewegen. Dear father of: Ted &amp; Jane Groenewegen — Burlington Neil &amp; John Schurman — Willowdale Jackie &amp; Gerry Hoogterp — Ottawa John &amp; Ania Groenewegen — London Manen &amp; Ward Hann — Markham Louise &amp; Bob Bruinsma — Edmonton Earl Groenewegen &amp; Mary Germsma — Toronto Brother of Willy and Leonard Boers Ancaster, Edith &amp; John Vander Ende Chatham, Menks Groenewegen, Blenheim, Klaas Groenewegen and Cathrina Butenkamp, the Netherlands. 18 grandchildren and one great-grandchild. Funeral service and interment took place on May 28, 1994, in Campbellville, Ont.</p>
<h3>For Sale</h3> <p>1 Johannes Organ Opus 230 with acoustic system \$5,995 Phone: (905) 455-0797</p>					

## Classifieds

Obituaries	Miscellaneous	Teachers	Personal	Miscellaneous
<p>Feb 27 1913 - May 15 1994 "Those who trust in the Lord are like Mount Zion, which cannot be shaken but endures forever. As the mountains surround Jerusalem, so the Lord surrounds his people both now and forevermore" (Ps 125 1,2). On Sunday May 15, 1994 the Lord called home to eternal glory our dearly beloved husband, father and opa</p> <p><b>STEPHEN HANSMA</b> in his 82nd year. Loving husband of Mijntje Hansma (nee Brouwer de Koning). Dear father and opa of: Frank &amp; Gertie Hansma — Drayton Dave, Mike, Shenly Alice &amp; Bill Ronhaar — Hamilton Jeff, Mark, Rachel Tim &amp; Darlyne Hansma — Smithers, B.C. Tammy, Duane, Lisa, Grant, Melanie Jane &amp; Ed Pyper — Guelph Julie, Rob, Ken, Debbie Hilda &amp; Art VanLochem — Welland Kevin, Neil Pete &amp; Judy Hansma — Kitchener Nicole, Kayn, Danielle, Jason Steve &amp; Pat Hansma — Drayton Steve, Scott, Pam, Amy, Sarah Wilma &amp; Carl Stryker — Kitchener Rebecca, Gregory, Brian, Stephen Also survived by two brothers, John and his wife Lena of Cambridge, and Ralph and his wife Aafke of Shallow Lake.</p> <p>He was predeceased by one daughter Winnie in infancy and two brothers Roel and Auke.</p> <p>The funeral service was held on Wednesday, May 18, 1994, in the Drayton Chr Ref Church, Pastor Dave Tigchelaar officiating.</p> <p>Correspondence address: P.O. Box 282, 31 Spring Street, Drayton, ON N0G 1P0</p>	<p><b>Parents' anniversary coming up?</b> Give a gift that gives back. Let us help your parents write their memoirs. Confidentiality assured. References available. Lasting value.</p> <p>Call (905) 988-6174</p> <p><b>Teachers</b></p> <p><b>DUCHESS</b>, Alta.: Newell Chr. School invites applications for the position of a teaching principal for the 1994-95 school year. Interested applicants with a strong commitment to Christian education should fax resumes to:</p> <p>David Hartgerink Board Chairman Fax: (403) 362-7462 Phone: (403) 362-3502</p> <p><b>FRUITLAND</b>: John Knox Memorial Chr. School seeks applications for a 25% part-time administrator-relief position. Ex-teaching Grade 6-8 French is an asset. If interested please forward a resume to:</p> <p>Mr. J. de Jager, Principal John Knox Memorial Chr. School 795 Hwy. #8 Fruitland, ON L8E 5J3 or call (905) 643-2460</p> <p><b>GEOGETOWN</b>, Ont.: Georgetown District Chr. School requires an experienced teacher for a 50% resource position. Please contact Treonna Syberema, Principal, for further information or send application to:</p> <p>Georgetown District Chr. School 11643 Trafalgar Road R.R. #1, Georgetown, ON L7G 4S4 Phone: (905) 877-4221</p> <p><b>HOUSTON</b>, B.C.: Houston Chr. School, located in the scenic Bulkley Valley, is in need of a part-time Kindergarten teacher for the 1994-95 school year. Interested teachers are encouraged to contact the school by writing to:</p> <p>Houston Chr. School Mr. Doyle Smiens, Principal Box 237 Houston, BC V0J 1Z0</p> <p>Thank you for your interest.</p>	<p><b>MISSISSAUGA</b>, Ont.: John Knox Chr. School in Mississauga invites applications for a possible part-time (50%) opening in upper elementary grades commencing September 1994. Ability to teach French a necessity. Expertise in classroom music and instrumental band an asset. Please contact principal:</p> <p>Mrs. Lorna Keith John Knox Chr. School 1884 Lakeshore Rd. West Mississauga, ON L5J 1J7 (905) 822-8131</p> <p><b>NEERLANDIA</b>, Alta.: Neerlandia School requires a full-time Grade 3 teacher, beginning August 1994. Experience in the use of Macintosh computers is an asset. Neerlandia School is a public school K-10 which promotes a non-denominational Christian philosophy. Please send resume to:</p> <p>Mr. Ralph Helder, Principal c/o Neerlandia School Box 10 Neerlandia, AB T0G 1R0 Phone: (403) 674-5581 Fax: (403) 674-2927</p> <p><b>SURREY</b>, B.C.: Fraser Valley Chr. High School, an interdenominational school in the Reformed tradition serving families and students in the lower Fraser Valley, will have an opening in the area of Music for the 1994/95 school year. Applicants should send resumes to:</p> <p>Mr. Al Boerema, Principal Fraser Valley Chr. High School 15353-92 Avenue Surrey, BC V3R 1C3 Phone (604) 581-1033</p>	<p>Nice Christian lady, 40+ of age, mother of one, business associate, with oriental background, likes nature, music, is looking for a warm Christian, hopefully someone to share life with. Please reply to File #2619, c/o Christian Courier, 4-261 Martindale Road, St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1</p> <p><b>For Rent</b></p> <p><b>BERGENTHEIM</b> <b>TE HUUR VOOR VAKANTIE:</b> Moderne gemeubileerde woning (modern furnished home) — per week van per maand — in Bergenheim, Overijssel (ongeveer 12 km van Ommen). Voor volledige informatie bel of schrijf naar: J. Snijders, 651-4 Ave. E., Brooks AB T1R 0H4. Tel. (403) 362-4052 of (403) 362-2653.</p> <p><b>Real Estate</b></p> <p>Attractive family home near Christian schools in Ottawa, Ont. If you are considering a move to Ottawa or Kanata, please call or fax me for information on this excellent property: 3-bedrooms, hardwood floors, finished basement, double garage and large lot. Owner transferred. \$166,800. Call Gladys Baart, Century 21 John De Vries Ltd., at (613) 836-2570 or (613) 832-2090.</p> <p><b>Church News</b></p> <p><b>Christian Reformed Church</b></p> <p>Calls Accepted — to First, Regina, Sask., Rev. Cornelius Pool of Fresno, California.</p> <p>Calls declined — to Cephas, Peterborough, Ont. Rev. Jack Kerkhof of Burlington, Ont.</p>	<p><b>SUN + FUN = PROFIT</b> Travel's Best Idea Since 1492</p> <p>As a member of the Travelnet Group you can turn travel into a profitable part-time or full-time income</p> <p><b>The offer:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Be your own BOSS</li> <li>- Totally flexible schedule</li> <li>- Very low start-up</li> <li>- Excellent training &amp; support</li> <li>- No overhead</li> <li>- No licensing</li> <li>- No selling</li> <li>- No location restrictions</li> <li>- International marketplace</li> </ul> <p><b>LOOKING FOR A FEW GOOD PEOPLE... CALL</b> Lynda Van Der Kooy (705) 742-3165</p> <p>Come to beautiful Wasaga Beach and stay at</p> <p><b>ALTON LODGES</b></p> <p>Clean 1- &amp; 2-bedroom house-keeping cottages, friendly family atmosphere, close to beach and river. 20% discount on weekly rates until June 18, 1994.</p> <p>For information write or phone to: Len &amp; Rita Bette, Alton Lodges 459 Mosley St. Wasaga Beach, ON L0L 2P0 (705) 429-2420</p> <p><b>BED &amp; BREAKFAST</b> Beautiful Niagara Falls A pleasant 15 min. walk to the Falls. Friendly home, nice rooms. Superb breakfast. Dutch spoken. Mike &amp; Joan Havinga (905) 358-3534</p> <p><b>JENDERS</b> Architects</p> <p>MANY YEARS OF EXPERIENCE IN THE PLANNING AND DESIGN OF COMMERCIAL, INDUSTRIAL, EDUCATION AND CARE FACILITIES HAVE MADE US A VALUED BUILDING PARTNER TO MANY CONGREGATIONS AND CHRISTIAN ORGANIZATIONS. PLEASE CALL TO LEARN HOW WE CAN HELP YOU! F.J. Jenders and Associates Canada Limited Architects Engineers Planners Project Managers 20 COUNTY COURT BLDG. BRAMPTON, ON SUITE 500 (905) 417-1618</p> <p><b>Miscellaneous</b></p> <p><b>Attention</b></p> <p>Anniversary Announcements</p> <p>Because of declining revenues, <i>Christian Courier</i> will no longer publish free photos with anniversary announcements celebrating 50 years or more. Effective June 1, 1994, please add the normal fee of \$25 when sending a photo. This applies to all announcements.</p> <p>Stan de Jong, manager</p>
<p>Aalten 1905 On May 28, 1994, the Lord took unto Himself</p> <p><b>GERRIT CHRISTIAAN STRONKS</b> Psalm 73:23-28 Beloved husband for 63 years of Gesina Johanna Stronks-Heinen Dear father of Dick &amp; Wilma Stronks — Burlington William &amp; Gloria Stronks — Grand Rapids, Mich John &amp; Wilma Stronks — Ancaster Erme &amp; Rie Stronks — Burlington Joyce &amp; John Visser — Barrie Trudy &amp; Martin Reitsma — Brantford Hank &amp; Sue Stronks — New Dundee Jack &amp; Georgia Stronks — Brantford Dear Opa of 27 grandchildren and 35 great-grandchildren Funeral services were held on June 1, 1994, at the New Street Chr Ref Church in Burlington, Ont. Correspondence address: Holland Christian Homes, c/o Dick Stronks, 608 Braemore Rd., Burlington, ON L7N 3E5</p>	<p><b>For Rent</b></p> <p><b>HAMILTON</b>, Ont. 1-bedroom basement apt. Hamilton Mountain, close to church and school. For more info call (905) 387-1509</p>	<p><b>Personal</b></p> <p>Christian patriot, farmer's background, well-educated, travelled, passion for history, concern for the future, seeks mature, yet open-minded lady. Gen. 2:24-25; picture confidential. P.O. Box 95003, Stouffville, ON L4A 1J1</p>		

## Classifieds

## Miscellaneous

## Miscellaneous

## Miscellaneous

## Job Opportunities

## Job Opportunities

Evangelistic Materials  
In Arabic

Also, in English,  
*The Bible and Islam*  
\$4.95 Canada / \$3.95 U.S.  
and a folder of essays on  
Understanding the Middle  
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The Back to God Hour  
P.O. Box 5070  
Burlington, ON L7R 3Y8

## Seeking New Pastors

New Life Fellowship Chr. Ref. Church of Red Deer, Alta., is seeking a pastor of Youth and Discipleship to join our exciting ministry. This position will be filled by either two part-time or one full-time ministry worker(s). Candidates should possess a deep love for the Lord and the necessary skills and gifts to effectively nurture our youth and assimilate new members into the body of Christ. Experience and education will be considered a valuable asset. Send resumes to Box 1053, Red Deer, AB T4N 6S5. Attention: Selection Cte. Phone (403) 341-3111. Deadline: July 14, 1994.

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## KITCHENER, ONTARIO

First Christian Reformed Church is moving. We have outgrown and sold our premises at 388 Ottawa St. S. The congregation is actively working towards completion of a new church building in Kitchener. In the interim, the facilities of Woodland Christian High School (R.R. #1, Breslau, Ont.) will be used for worship. This change is effective on Sunday, June 12, 1994.

New mailing address: c/o D. Flikweert, Clerk,  
35 Cecile Dr., Kitchener, ON N2M 1V2



## Frisian Picnic

Friday, July 1, 1994

Starts at 11 a.m.

Pinehurst Conservation Park  
(Highway #24a — 4 miles north of Paris)

Hope to see you all there!

## Seeking a Pastor

The Maranatha Chr. Ref. Church of Calgary, Alta., a committed congregation of 39 families, is looking for a pastor. Eighteen months ago, approximately half of our congregation left the CRC denomination and we are now in need of a leader who will help us to rebuild our church. Inquiries and/or resumes may be forwarded to the Search Committee, Maranatha Chr. Ref. Church, 2111-52 Street, N.W., Calgary, AB T3B 1C3 Canada, or contact Mrs. Alice Milne, Secretary, Search Committee, (403) 288-4530.

## Seeking a Pastor

Glad Tidings Christian Reformed Church, located in Edmonton, Alta., is seeking a pastor. We are a small group, with a rich history, who desire to continue to be challenged to live as active disciples, reaching out to others and walking and living a spirit-filled life. Please contact Bill Diepeveen, Calling Committee Chair at (403) 483-5693 (evenings), 14620-90 Ave., Edmonton, AB T5R 4V3 if you wish to know more about us.

## Youth Director Needed

The Ebenezer Chr. Ref. Church in Leduc, Alta., needs a youth director for a half-time position. Ebenezer is a church with 350 members under the age of 30, and with a variety of youth programs in place. We are looking for a dynamic, committed youth director with experience and training to supply support and leadership. If interested, please write to: Al Notenbomer, R.R. #2, Leduc, AB T9E 2X2

## Attention Young Adults

Wondering what to do this September? Consider Project S.O.W. (Serving in Our World). Challenge yourself! Spend a year serving and experiencing community life in Winnipeg's inner city. Let God work in your life and come grow with us!

For more information contact:  
Project S.O.W., Attention: Marg Louwes  
335 St. John's Ave., Winnipeg, MB R2W 1H2  
Phone: (204) 582-4103



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## Classifieds/Events

## Miscellaneous

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## 40th Anniversary Christian Reformed Church Vernon, B.C.

We would like to invite all friends, former members and pastors to join us for our "Celebration Weekend" in the beautiful Okanagan Valley with special activities on **Friday** (Aug. 19), **Saturday** (Aug. 20), and **Sunday** (Aug. 21).

For an information package please write to:  
Anniversary Committee  
c/o Christian Reformed Church  
3605-12th Street  
Vernon, BC V1T 3S7  
or phone: (604) 549-1746

## Miscellaneous

**SLP**

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R. Vander Ploeg Sec./Treas.  
210 Clarke St. N.  
Woodstock, ON N4S 7M7  
Phone: (519) 539-2117

## Miscellaneous

**Maranatha Christian Reformed Church**  
St. Catharines, Ontario

## JOIN US FOR WORSHIP

If you are vacationing in the beautiful Niagara Falls area, join us on Sunday at Maranatha CRC, 301 Scott St., St. Catharines, Ont., at 10 a.m. and 5 p.m. If you are a CRC minister willing to fill our vacant pulpit during your vacation, please call **Sid Miedema** at (905) 937-0314.

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**Calendar**

- June 13-16** Fourth annual "Avond Vierdaagse", a 4-day evening walk at the Royal Botanical Gardens, **Burlington**, Ont. Info: (905) 383-6319.
- June 15** "Hollandse Dag," CRC, **Brockville**, Ont. Speaker: Rev. S. Van der Schaaf. Tickets \$7. Info.: Mrs. H. Pijl (613) 342-3613.
- June 17** "Christian Singles and Single-Again" conference/retreat at the Bible Conference Centre, **Guelph**. Out. Info.: Andy at (905) 521-8968 or Liz at (905) 522-8207.
- June 18** "Grunneger Picnic," 10 a.m., Grand River Conservation Area, **Rockwood**, Ont. Wie hoop'n op goed weer en' haileboel lu.
- June 22** CCBF's eighth annual, all-Ontario golf tournament (at Knollwood Golf) and barbecue (at Redeemer College) in **Ancaster**, Ont. Info.: (905) 634-8365.
- June 22** "Cypress Gardens Winter Ministry Picnic," 10:30 a.m., Southside Park, **Woodstock**, Ont. Info.: (905) 935-7764 or (519) 475-4946.
- June 23-26** "Canadian Christian Festival IV," at Copps Coliseum, **Hamilton**, Ont. Theme: "Sharing the Joy." Speakers include: George Carey, James Forbes Jr., David Mainse, Jean Vanier (Founder of L'Arche) and Lois Wilson. Info.: (905) 523-3100.
- June 25** Christians across Canada participate in "A Day to Change the World," as part of the "Global March for Jesus." Watch for local announcements. Info.: (416) 778-7080.
- July 28-Aug. 1** ICS Ontario Family Conference, at HIDCH, **Ancaster**, Ont. Theme: "Living in Grace: Forgiveness and Hope in Uncertain Times." Featured speaker: Dr. Lewis Smidt (Fuller Theological Seminary). Info.: (416) 979-2331.
- Aug. 19-21** 40th anniversary celebration weekend at the CRC, **Vernon**, B.C. Friends, former members and pastors are invited to attend. Info.: (604) 549-1746.



## Comment

The government spin doctors worked overtime to dress federal policy about our relationship with China in euphemistic colors. Quoting the Prime Minister the tale goes as follows: "The best way for Canada to help improve human rights in China is by doing business and spreading Western values there." What it really comes down to is this: "There's money to be made so let's get in there." What are Western values anyway? A buck is a buck is a buck?

★ ★ ★

The Chinese never use personal cheques, so all bills must be paid in cash. All 184,000 people in Beijing who are fortunate enough to have a telephone must pay their bill in cash every month at the telephone office. A policeman armed with a club controls the mob of customers.

★ ★ ★

The feds are planning to beef up the Young Offenders Act with stiffer jail terms for youthful criminals. Sometimes I think that Justice Minister Allan Rock is being groomed for higher office. Keep an eye on him. Mr. Chretien as well as John Turner and Pierre Trudeau held that portfolio. Justice ministers have a tendency to ascend.

Solicitor General Herb Gray is also planning an interesting piece of legislation: he wants to charge senior prison inmates for room and board by garnisheeing their social benefits cheques. Not such a bad idea at that.

★ ★ ★

In the old heart of Berlin — *Berlin Mitte* — many streets and avenues today still bear the names bestowed on them when the East German communist state was founded in 1949. Some of the street names are now felt to be inappropriate as Berlin gears up for its new role as the nation's seat of government and parliament in 1998. But not all East Berliners who were born in *Berlin Mitte* and grew up with socialism agree that the street names should be changed. Emotions on the subject run high. East is East and West is West and when the twain meet in Germany there is often not a lot of love lost between the two.

Germans were not allowed to participate in the D-Day commemorations in Normandy. Understandable as that is, it might not be contributing to recon-

ciliation between old enemies. Personally I would love to have a beer with the guy who almost 50 years ago put three bullets into me. It's my fantasy to one day make peace with him.

★ ★ ★

Our Southern neighbors refuse to synchronize their holidays with ours, so they celebrated their Memorial Day a week after our Victoria Day. As you know they also persist in observing Thanksgiving Day in the wrong month. On top of that they charge us more than \$1.40 for their dollar, a gesture that does not really do a lot for their exports or tourism.

★ ★ ★

The Pope is expected to sing an old refrain this week by banning the ordination

## World news

Carl D. Tuyl

of female priests. "This is in-your-face politics," said Frances Kissling, president of the U.S.-based Catholics for a Free Choice.

★ ★ ★

Trouble, bloody trouble continues in Rwanda, where the soil is soaked with brother's blood; in Bosnia, where you need a score card to make sense of the shooting gallery; and in Yemen, where North and South Yemenites aim their deadly weapons at each other. When will we ever learn?

★ ★ ★

The PLO and the Israeli government are engaged in a war of words about each other's rights to Jerusalem as capital. Formal talks on the fate of Jerusalem will be discussed in the year 1996.

★ ★ ★

In the city cemetery of Key West, Florida, this plaintive cry is engraved on a tombstone: "I told you I was sick."

Now with summer about to begin, I wish you all the very best success with your tomato

## bytes



plants, barbecues and ant poison.

Carl Tuyl is chaplaincy co-ordinator in Canada for the Christian Reformed Church and is a member of the Ontario Multifaith Council on Spiritual and Religious Care.

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## News



Syrt "undergoing" standing ovation.

Al Wolters

VICTORIA, B.C. — At a special ceremony held at the Emanu-El Synagogue, Israeli ambassador to Canada Isaac Shelef awarded the Medal of the Righteous Among the Nations to Syrt and Lucinda Wolters. The award was given on May 12 in recognition of the work done by the Wolters on

behalf of the Jews during the Second World War.

Syrt Wolters, an 82-year-old barber in Victoria, is well-known to readers of *Christian Courier* as a former columnist. He and his first wife Lucinda (Luchiena Seinen), who died in 1959, received the award for hiding a Jewish family in their home in Enschede, the Netherlands, from November 1942 to the end of the war, and for giving a home to a Jewish girl, whom they passed off as their visiting niece.

#### Kept the promise

Among those present in the packed synagogue was Sara Spanier, the daughter of Heinz Spanier, one of the Jews who had been hidden in the Wolters home during the war. She spoke on behalf of the Spanier family, all of whom have died in the meantime.

She and her husband, Robert, travelled from the Netherlands to attend the ceremony in fulfillment of a promise she had made to her father before his death last year. It was Heinz Spanier who initiated the process which led to the award. In an inter-

view with CBC television, Sara said of Syrt, whom she had never met before: "I owe him my life."

In his official presentation of the Medal of the Righteous Among the Nations, Ambassador Shelef spoke of the heroism of the many citizens who had risked their lives during the Second World War to protect their Jewish fellow citizens. Addressing Syrt directly, he said, "Mr. Wolters, your actions were the actions that bind the heart to the two elementary calls of human existence: love and courage."

Shelef also presented Syrt with an official Certificate of Honor, written in Hebrew and English, and told him that his name and that of his wife would be permanently inscribed on the Honor Wall in the Garden of the Righteous in Jerusalem, part of the Holocaust memorial Yad Vashem. To this he added the Hebrew congratulatory phrase *kol ha-kavod*: "May you receive all honor."

In various interviews Syrt Wolters paid tribute to his first wife, Lucinda, who had borne the brunt of the difficulties in-



Sara said: "Because you saved my father -- you've saved me!"

volved in hiding the Jewish family. It was Lucinda, he said, who had initially suggested taking the Spaniers into their home, even though the Wolters household was not a safe hiding place because of Syrt's involvement with the underground.

What had started out as a temporary emergency measure

lasted 30 months. During this time the Spanier family had to be kept hidden even from the Wolters' three small children.

#### God's providence

In his words of acknowledgement at the ceremony, Syrt recalled the difficulty of keeping the Spanier family, consisting of two parents and two sons in their late 20s, hidden from his children in the small three-bedroom house in Enschede.

On one occasion Heinz darted into a closet when Lucinda and little Grietje (now Margaret Kuyvenhoven of Victoria) came upstairs to hang up the laundry in the attic. The child seemed to have noticed nothing. But two days later she asked, "Mommy, where is that man now? Or is he still in the closet?"

Syrt concluded the anecdote by saying, "It seemed to us that the Lord governed even the thinking of our children."

It was a special privilege for this reporter to attend the ceremony in Victoria. Since he was the youngest of the three Wolters children — just two months old when the Spaniers were first taken into the Wolters home — he can remember nothing of those anxious days. But he grew up with the stories, and is extremely proud of his father and his late mother, who like so many other Dutch citizens during the Nazi occupation risked their lives in obedience to Christ's command to love our neighbors as ourselves.

## Unexpected mortgage grant activates



Mr. Tabak, 91, (see r.) was the first resident to move into the existing home in 1972. Above: architect's sketch of the new addition to Emmanuel Home.

Raymond J. Schraa

EDMONTON — It was a beautiful warm and cloudless morning on May 14, 1994, when nearly 200 people gathered outside Emmanuel Home to witness the groundbreaking ceremony for an extended care facility.

For about eight years the board had been lobbying the Al-

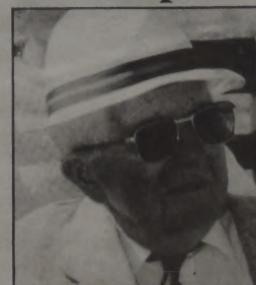
berta government for funds. Many of the officials had expressed interest in the proposal, yet every time the answer had

been negative; there were no funds available.

After many rejections, the board almost gave up hope. But upon the insistence of one member in particular, it was decided to give it one more try. Former president John Vanden Brink says he almost fell off his chair when on Oct. 12, 1993, he received a telephone call from the government informing him that the latest request had been approved and that a long-term, low-interest mortgage of \$3.4 million had been allotted for the project.

Since the estimated cost of the new facility is \$5.5 million, it was clear that \$1.6 million had to be raised besides the \$500,000 already in the bank. The government stipulated that all this money had to be raised before March 31, 1994, before the actual contract could be

## silver spade



awarded. Thanks to many gifts and an additional loan from Canada Housing and Mortgage, preparatory work on the project started.

Needless to say, there was great rejoicing and thankful praise to God when 91-year-old Mr. R. Tabak, who moved into the present home in 1972, used a gleaming spade to initiate the work on the 50 one-bedroom suites of phase two of the Emmanuel Home.

The singing of "Now thank we all our God" seemed a fitting closing song and tribute to God's faithfulness and provision.

#### Thinkbit

"Some make money to forget they're not happy. Others are happy and forget to make money."

Source: Bert Witvoet